World's
Great Adventure
Stories

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WORLD'S GREAT ADVENTURE STORIES

World's Great Adventure Stories

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Siege of Berlin

We ascended the Avenue des Champs Elysées with Doctor V——, reading, upon those walls pierced with shells and sidewalks dug up with grapeshot, the story of the Siege of Paris. Just before we reached the Rondpoint de l'Etoile, the Doctor paused, and pointing out to me one of those great corner-houses which face the Arc de Triomphe with such a pompous air, he said,——

"Do you see those four closed windows up there over the balcony? In the early part of the month of August of last year, that awful month full of storm and disaster, I was summoned to that apartment to attend a severe case of apoplexy. My patient was Colonel Jouve, an old cuirassier of the First Empire. Love of country was his ruling passion, and his mistress was Glory. At the beginning of the war he had taken up quarters in the Champs Elysées in that apartment with the balcony. Do you guess why? That he might witness the triumphal re-entry of our troops. Poor old man! The news of Wissembourg reached his ears just as he was rising from table. He saw the name of Napoleon at the end of that bulletin of defeat, and the sudden shock prostrated him.

"When I reached the old cuirassier, he was stretched at full length upon the carpet of his room. His face gave no signs of life, but it was bleeding as if he had received a tremendous blow upon the head. Standing, he must have presented an imposing figure. As he lay there, he looked like a giant. His features were so noble, his silvery locks curled so thickly, he had such splendid teeth, that this octogenarian looked scarcely more than sixty years of age. Near him knelt his granddaughter in tears. She resembled him strongly. The sight of both together suggested two beautiful Greek medals struck from the same impression; but one was old and dull, its outlines somewhat worn, while the other was bright and clear-cut, having all the smoothness and brilliancy of a first impression.

"The child's grief touched me. Her grandfather had been a soldier. Her father, too, was a soldier, an officer of MacMahon's staff; and at sight of this stately old hero prostrate, my imagination pictured a scene not less terrible. I did my best to reassure her, but at heart I felt no hope. We had to deal with a severe case of hemiplegia, and at eighty recovery is extremely doubtful. And, in fact, for three days the sick man never rallied from the stupour in which I had found him. Meanwhile news of the battle of Reichshoffen had just reached Paris. You will remember how strangely we were deceived. Until evening we all believed a great victory had been gained, twenty thousand Prussians slain, the prince royal a prisoner. Through some agency scarcely less than miraculous, some echo of the nation's joy must have reached the patient, deaf and dumb though he was, some magnetic current must have pene-

trated even that paralyzed frame, for that evening, when I approached his bedside, I saw that he was a new man. His eye was clear almost, his tongue no longer thick. He was able to smile, and twice he stammered 'Vic-to-ry!'

" 'Yes, colonel, a great victory!'

"And as I acquainted him with the details of MacMahon's glorious success, his features relaxed, his face brightened.

"As I was about to leave the apartment, I found the young girl waiting for me. She was weeping. 'But he is out of danger!' I said, taking her hands in mine.

"The unhappy child scarcely ventured a reply. The bulletins had just announced the true story of Reichshoffen. MacMahon was retreating, the army cut to pieces. Our eyes could not conceal the consternation both felt. The child was heartbroken. She was thinking of her father. But I trembled at thought of the old man. Surely he could not survive this fresh shock. But what should we do? Leave him to enjoy that happiness, those illusions which had breathed new life into him? But in that case we must feed him upon lies. 'Very well, I will lie to him!' said the young heroine, quickly drying her eyes, and her face was wreathed in smiles when she returned to her grandfather's chamber.

"She had undertaken no light task. During the first days it was not so difficult a matter, for the good man's head was very weak, and he was as easily deceived as a child. But as health returned, his ideas grew clearer. It was necessary to keep him informed of the movement of the various armies, and to manufacture military bulletins for him. And it was truly pitiable to see that lovely child buried night and day in a map of Germany, pinning tiny flags upon it, endeavouring to invent the details of a glorious campaign. Bazaine had advanced upon Berlin, Froissart was in Bavaria, MacMahon on the Baltic! Sometimes she consulted me, and I aided her as far as I could, but in carrying out this imaginary invasion no one rendered us greater assistance than the grandfather himself. He had conquered Germany so many times during the First Empire! He knew every move in advance. 'This is where they will go next!' 'This will be their next move,' he would say; and his anticipations never failing to prove themselves correct, he took not a little pride in them.

"But, alas! to no avail did we take cities, win battles. We did not move rapidly enough to suit him. That old man was simply insatiable. Every day I visited him I heard news of some fresh exploit.

" 'Doctor, we have taken Mayence,' said the young girl, advancing towards me with a heartrending smile, and through the door I heard a joyous voice exclaiming, 'We move! we move! in a week more we shall enter Berlin.'

"As a matter of fact, the Prussians would reach Paris in another week. We asked ourselves at first whether it would not be better to remove our patient from the city, but, once outside of Paris, the condition of France would have told him all; moreover, he was too weak, too much benumbed from the effect of the first shock, to learn the truth then. It was decided to remain.

"The first day of the investment of

the city, I climbed up to my patient's apartment. Well I remember that day! My heart was heavy, full of anguish. For the gates of Paris were closed, the enemy under her very walls, and even her outskirts converted into frontiers. I found the ingenuous old man sitting up in bed, proud and jubilant.

"'Well,' he said, 'at last the *siege* has begun!'

"I looked at him; I was stunned. 'Why, colonel,' I asked, 'how do you know that?'

"His grand-daughter glanced in my direction.

"'Oh, yes, doctor; this is great news! The siege of Berlin has begun.'

"And as she spoke, she plied her needle with a little affectation of composure. How should he suspect anything? Though the cannons were firing from the forts, he could not hear them. And although unhappy Paris was turned upside down, and filled with gloom and forebodings, he saw nothing of it all. But where he lay, he could get a glimpse of the Arc de Triomphe, and his chamber was filled with bric-à-brac of the First Empire, admirably fitted to nourish his illusions. Portraits of marshals were there, engravings of battles; there was a picture of the *King of Rome* in baby robes. There were tall, stiff consoles ornamented with trophied brass, and loaded with imperial relics, medallions, bronzes; there was a bit of the rock of St. Helena under a glass globe; there were numerous miniatures always representing the same lady, in ballroom costume, in a yellow robe with leg-of-mutton sleeves, a pair of bright eyes glancing from beneath her carefully curled locks.

"All these ornaments, the King of Rome, the marshals, the yellow ladies, those short-waisted, high-girdled figures whose stiff and artificial lines were considered the very embodiment of grace in 1806—gallant colonel!—it was such things as those, it was that atmosphere of victory and conquest, which, far more than any words of ours, made him accept the story of the siege of Berlin with such childlike simplicity.

"From that day, our military operations were far less complex. To take Berlin was simply a question of patience. From time to time, when the old man grew weary of waiting, we would read him a letter from his son; of course, an imaginary letter, for Paris was cut off from the outer world then, and, besides, since the battle of Sedan, MacMahon's aide-de-camp was confined in a German fortress. You may imagine that poor child's despair, living from day to day with no news of her father, but knowing that he was a prisoner, deprived of everything, sick, perhaps,—imagine her agony knowing all this, but compelled to speak for him, to invent such joyous epistles in his behalf, a trifle brief, perhaps, but the brevity of a soldier in the field, who answers his country's cry, 'Forward!' and sees her arms everywhere victorious. Sometimes she had not the heart for these letters, and then weeks passed without news. But the old man would grow restless and could not sleep. Then a letter would at once arrive from Germany, and she would read it gayly at his bedside, repressing her tears. The colonel always listened religiously, with a very wise air; he approved, criticized, explained to us here and there a passage which seemed

slightly obscure. But his finest efforts were replies he sent his son. 'Never forget that you are a Frenchman,' he would say. 'Be generous to these poor people. Invade their country, but not as an oppressor.' Then followed suggestions without end, delightful twaddle concerning a right observance of propriety, and what constituted courtesy towards women,—in short, a whole military code for the guidance of these *conquerors;* he added some reflections upon politics in general, and outlined the conditions of peace which must be imposed upon the vanquished. I must add that, as regards the last subject, his demands were not severe.

"'A war indemnity, only that; what good would it do to seize their provinces? A France could never be made out of Germany!'

"He dictated these words with a steady voice, with such candour, and such noble faith in his country, that it was impossible to listen to him unmoved.

"And all the while the siege was progressing, not, alas! that of Berlin. There were days of severe cold, of bombardment, of epidemics and famine. But, thanks to our cares, our efforts, and all those proofs of indefatigable tenderness which were multiplied about him, the old man never felt a moment's anxiety. To the very end I was able to obtain white bread and fresh meat for him. Of course, there was none for anyone else, and you cannot imagine anything more touching than this grandfather's breakfasts, of which he partook with such innocent egotism, the old man sitting up in bed, fresh and smiling, his napkin under his chin, the grand-daughter ever at his side, her pale face revealing the privation she had suffered; she guided his hands, compelled him to drink, aided him as he ate all the good things saved specially for him. Enlivened by his repast, enjoying the comfort of his warm chamber while the cold winter wind blew without, and the snow whirled about his windows, the aged cuirassier would recall his campaigns in the North and related to us for the hundredth time the tale of that mournful retreat from Moscow, when there was no other food than frozen biscuit and horse-flesh.

"'Do you know what that means, child? We ate horse-flesh!' I think she understood perfectly. She had been eating no other meat for two months. From day to day, as convalescence approached, the patient began to make our task a more difficult one. That lethargy of all his senses, of all his limbs, had aided us up to this time, but was beginning to leave him. Several times those terrible volleys from the Porte Maillot made him start suddenly, his ear as alert as a hound's: we were obliged to invent a final victory for Bazaine before Berlin, and to explain that the salutes in front of Les Invalides were in honour of the event. Another day, when we had pushed his bed close to the window, I think it was the Thursday the battle of Buzenval occurred, he saw the National Guard quite distinctly as it formed in front of the Avenue de la Grande Armée.

"'What troops are those?' asked our colonel, and we heard him mutter to himself,——

"'Badly drilled! badly drilled!'

"Nothing came of this incident, but we realized that it now behooved us to

take greater precautions than before. Unfortunately we were not cautious enough.

"One evening on my arrival, the child came to me, her face full of anxiety.

" 'Tomorrow they enter,' she said.

"Was the door of the grandfather's room ajar? I do remember, and have often thought in recalling that evening, that his features wore an unusual expression. It is very likely that he had heard what we were saying. But we were speaking of the Prussians, and he was thinking of the French army, and of that triumphal entry he had been expecting for many a day,—MacMahon descending the avenue to martial music, along a path strewn with flowers, his son at the Marshal's side, and there upon the balcony, the old warrior himself in full uniform, as upon the field of Lutzen, saluting the flags that had many a rent in them, and our eagles blackened with powder.

"Poor Father Jouve! Doubtless he fancied we would not permit him to assist at that entry of our troops, anxious to spare him the excitement of so great an event. For he said nothing to anyone, but the following day, just at the hour when the Prussians advanced somewhat timidly upon the long avenue leading from the Porte Maillot to the Tuileries, an upper window opened softly, and the colonel himself appeared upon the balcony, wearing his helmet, his long cavalry sword, and all the antiquated but glorious toggery of an old cuirassier of Milhaud. I still ask myself what tremendous effort of his will, what sudden start of life, had put him on his feet again, and in all his war trappings. But one fact is certain. There he stood upon the balcony, amazed to find the avenue so wide and still, the blinds of the houses closed, and Paris itself as gloomy as a vast lazaretto, flags everywhere, but strangely enough, only white flags with red crosses, and no one to meet our soldiers.

"For a moment he must have believed he had made a mistake,—but, no! yonder behind the Arc de Triomphe, issued an indistinct rattle, a black line advanced steadily into the morning light. Then by degrees the tops of helmets could be seen flashing in the sunlight, and the drums of Jena began to beat. And then beneath the Arc de l'Etoile, accented by the rhythmic tramp of the regiments and the clashing of sabres, resounded the strains of Schubert's triumphal march.

"Then through the dismal silence of the place was heard an awful cry, 'To arms! to arms! the Prussians!' and the four uhlans of the advance-guard, looking towards the balcony above, could see the majestic figure of an old man reeling, his arms outstretched. He fell heavily. This time the shock had indeed proved fatal. Colonel Jouve was dead."

The White Wolf

THIS is the story the old Marquis d'Arville told us after a dinner in honor of Saint-Hubert, at the house of Baron des Ravels. They had run down a stag that day. The Marquis was the only one of the guests who had not taken part in the chase. He never hunted.

During the whole of the long repast, they had talked of scarcely anything but the massacre of animals. Even the ladies interested themselves in the sanguinary and often unlikely stories, while the orators mimicked the attacks and combats between man and beast, raising their arms and speaking in thunderous tones.

M. d'Arville talked much, with a certain poesy, a little flourish, but full of effect. He must have repeated this story often, it ran so smoothly, never halting at a choice of words in which to clothe an image.

"Gentlemen, I never hunt, nor did my father, nor my grandfather, nor my great-great-grandfather. The last named was the son of a man who hunted more than all of you. He died in 1764. I will tell you how. He was named John, and was married, and became the father of the man who was my great-great-grandfather. He lived with his younger brother, Francis d'Arville, in our castle, in the midst of a deep forest in Lorraine.

"Francis d'Arville always remained a boy through his love for hunting. They both hunted from one end of the year to the other without cessation or weariness. They loved nothing else, understood nothing else, talked only of this, and lived for this alone.

"They were possessed by this terrible, inexorable passion. It consumed them, having taken entire control of them, leaving no place for anything else. They had agreed not to put off the chase for any reason whatsoever. My great-great-grandfather was born while his father was following a fox, but John d'Arville did not interrupt his sport, and swore that the little beggar might have waited until after the death-cry! His brother Francis showed himself still more hot-headed than he. The first thing on rising, he would go to see the dogs, then the horses; then he would shoot some birds about the place, even when about to set out hunting big game.

"They were called in the country Monsieur the Marquis and Monsieur the Cadet, noblemen then not acting as do those of our time, who wish to establish in their titles a descending scale of rank, for the son of a marquis is no more a count, or the son of a viscount a baron, than the son of a general is a colonel by birth. But the niggardly vanity of the day finds profit in this arrangement. To return to my ancestors:

"They were, it appears, immoderately large, bony, hairy, violent, and vigorous. The younger one was taller than the elder, and had such a voice that, according to a legend he was very proud of, all the leaves of the forest moved when he shouted.

"And when mounted, ready for the chase, it must have been a superb sight to see these two giants astride their great horses.

"Toward the middle of the winter of that year, 1764, the cold was excessive and the wolves became ferocious.

"They even attacked belated peasants, roamed around houses at night, howled from sunset to sunrise, and ravaged the stables.

"At one time a rumor was circulated. It was said that a colossal wolf, of grayish-white color, which had eaten two children, devoured the arm of a woman, strangled all the watchdogs of the country, was now coming without fear into the house inclosures and smelling around the doors. Many inhabitants affirmed that they had felt his breath, which made the lights flicker. Shortly a panic ran through all the province. No one dared to go out after nightfall. The very shadows seemed haunted by the image of this beast.

"The brothers D'Arville resolved to find and slay him. So they called together for a grand chase all the gentlemen of the country.

"It was in vain. They had beaten the forests and scoured the thickets, but had seen nothing of him. They killed wolves, but not that one. And each night after such a chase, the beast, as if to avenge himself, attacked some traveler, or devoured some cattle, always far from the place where they had sought him.

"Finally, one night he found a way into the swine-house of the castle D'Arville and ate two beauties of the best breed.

"The two brothers were furious, interpreting the attack as one of bravado on the part of the monster—a direct injury, a defiance. Therefore, taking all their best-trained hounds, they set out to run down the beast, with courage excited by anger.

"From dawn until the sun descended behind the great nut-trees, they beat about forests with no result.

"At last, both of them, angry and disheartened, turned their horses' steps into a by path bordered by rushwood. They were marveling at the baffling power of this wolf, when suddenly they were seized with a mysterious fear.

"The elder said:

" 'This can be no ordinary beast. One might say he can think like a man.'

"The younger replied:

" 'Perhaps we should get our cousin, the Bishop, to bless a bullet for him, or ask a priest to pronounce some words to help us.'

"Then they were silent.

"John continued: 'Look at the sun, how red it is. The great wolf will do mischief to-night.'

"He had scarcely finished speaking when his horse reared. Francis's horse started to run at the same time. A large bush covered with dead leaves rose before them, and a colossal beast, grayish white, sprang out, scampering away through the wood.

"Both gave a grunt of satisfaction, and bending to the necks of their heavy horses, they urged them on with the weight of their bodies, exciting them, hastening with voice and spur, until these strong riders seemed to carry the weight of their beasts between their knees, carrying them by force as if they were flying.

"Thus they rode, crashing through forests, crossing ravines, climbing up the sides of steep gorges, and sounding the horn, at frequent intervals. to

arouse the people and the dogs of the neighborhood.

"But suddenly, in the course of this breakneck ride, my ancestor struck his forehead against a large branch and fractured his skull. He fell to the ground as if dead, while his frightened horse disappeared in the surrounding thicket.

"The younger D'Arville stopped short, sprang to the ground, seized his brother in his arms, and saw that he had lost consciousness.

"He sat down beside him, took his disfigured head upon his knees, looking earnestly at the lifeless face. Little by little a fear crept over him, a strange fear that he had never felt before, fear of the shadows, of the solitude, of the lonely woods, and also of the chimerical wolf, which had now come to be the death of his brother.

"The shadows deepened, the branches of the trees crackled in the sharp cold. Francis arose shivering, incapable of remaining there longer, and already feeling his strength fail. There was nothing to be heard, neither the voice of dogs nor the sound of a horn; all within this invisible horizon was mute. And in this gloomy silence and the chill of evening there was something strange and frightful.

"With his powerful hands he seized John's body and laid it across the saddle to take it home; then mounted gently behind it, his mind troubled by horrible, supernatural images, as if he were possessed.

"Suddenly, in the midst of these fears, a great form passed. It was the wolf. A violent fit of terror seized upon the hunter; something cold, like a stream of ice-water seemed to glide through his veins, and he made the sign of the cross, like a monk haunted with devils, so dismayed was he by the reappearance of the frightful wanderer. Then, his eyes falling upon the inert body before him, his fear was quickly changed to anger, and he trembled with inordinate rage.

"He pricked his horse and darted after him.

"He followed him through copses, over ravines, and around great forest trees, traversing woods that he no longer recognized, his eye fixed upon a white spot, which was ever flying from him as night covered the earth.

"His horse also seemed moved by an unknown force. He galloped on with neck extended, crashing over small trees and rocks, with the body of the dead stretched across him on the saddle. Brambles caught in his mane; his head, where it had struck the trunks of trees, was spattered with blood; the marks of the spurs were over his flanks.

"Suddenly the animal and its rider came out of the forest, rushing through a valley as the moon appeared above the hills. This valley was stony and shut in by enormous rocks, over which it was impossible to pass; there was no other way for the wolf but to turn on his steps.

"Francis gave such a shout of joy and revenge that the echo of it was like the roll of thunder. He leaped from his horse, knife in hand.

"The bristling beast, with rounded back, was awaiting him; his eyes shining like two stars. But before joining in battle, the strong hunter, grasping his brother, seated him upon a rock, supporting his head, which was now but a mass of blood, with stones, and

cried aloud to him, as to one deaf: 'Look, John! Look here!'

"Then he threw himself upon the monster. He felt himself strong enough to overthrow a mountain, to crush the very rocks in his hands. The beast meant to kill him by sinking his claws in his vitals; but the man had seized him by the throat, without even making use of his weapon, and strangled him gently, waiting until his breath stopped and he could hear the death-rattle at his heart. And he laughed, with the joy of dismay, clutching more and more with a terrible hold, and crying out in his delirium: 'Look, John! Look!' All resistance ceased. The body of the wolf was limp. He was dead.

"Then Francis, taking him in his arms, threw him down at the feet of his elder brother, crying out in expectant voice: 'Here, here, my little John, here he is!'

"Then he placed upon the saddle the two bodies, the one above the other, and started on his way.

"He returned to the castle laughing and weeping, like Gargantua at the birth of Pantagruel, shouting in triumph and stamping with delight in relating the death of the beast, and moaning and tearing at his beard in calling the name of his brother.

"Often, later, when he recalled this day, he would declare, with tears in his eyes: 'If only poor John had seen me strangle the beast, he would have died content, I am sure!'

"The widow of my ancestor inspired in her son a horror of the chase, which was transmitted from father to son down to myself."

The Marquis d'Arville was silent. Some one asked: "Is the story a legend or not?"

And the narrator replied:

"I swear to you it is true from beginning to end."

Then a lady, in a sweet little voice declared:

"It is beautiful to have passions like that."

Honor of Von Bulow

General Sturm, head of the Prussian Brigade stationed in Frankfort, was a biggish, strongly made man of about two and fifty. He had a small head, with a high brow. His round face was red and when he was angry, which was often, it became crimson. His large eyes were almost always injected with blood, and he glared with fixed pupils when, as invariably was the case, he wished to be obeyed. All this, with his big mouth, thin lips, yellow teeth, menacing eyebrows, aquiline nose, and thick, short red neck, made him a formidable looking man. His voice was loud and penetrating, his gestures commanding, his movements brusque and rapid. He walked with long strides, he despised danger, but nevertheless seldom encountered any unless it was worth his while.

He had a passion for plumes, red, waving colours, the smell of powder, of gaming; he was as brusque in his words

as in his movements; violent and full of pride he brooked contradictions ill and readily flew into a passion. Then his face grew a crimson-violet, his grey eyes became golden and seemed to emit sparks. At such times, he completely forgot all the decencies of life, he swore, he insulted, he struck. Nevertheless he had some common sense, for knowing that he must from time to time have duels to fight, he spent his spare time in sword exercise and pistol shooting with the *maître-d'armes* of the regiment. And it must be allowed that he was a first-rate performer with both weapons; and, not only so, he had what was called "an unfortunate hand," and where another would have wounded slightly he wounded badly, and frequently he killed his adversary. This had happened ten or twelve times. His real name was *Ruhig,* which means *peaceful,* so inappropriate to its owner that he received the surname of *Sturm,* meaning storm or tempest. By this name he was always known. He had made a reputation for ferocity in the war against the Bavarians in 1848-49.

Upon this occasion he had summoned his chief of staff, Frederic von Bulow.

When Frederic presented himself he was relatively calm. Sitting in a great chair, and it was rare for him to be seated, he almost smiled.

"Ah, it is you," he said. "I was asking for you. General Roeder was here. Where have you been?"

"Excuse me, general," Frederic answered. "I had gone to my mother-in-law for news of one of my friends, who was seriously wounded in the battle."

"Oh! yes," said the general, "I heard about him—an Austrian. It is too good of you to enquire about such imperial vermin. I should like to see twenty-five thousand of them lying on the battlefield, where I would let them rot from the first man to the last."

"But, your Excellency, he was a friend——"

"Oh, very well—the matter is not in question. I am satisfied with you, baron," said General Sturm, in the same voice in which another man would have said "I loathe you!" "and I wish to do something for you."

"I have a little service to ask."

Frederic bowed.

"It is about General Manteuffel's subsidy of twenty-five millions of florins. You know about it, don't you?"

"Yes," said Frederic, "and it is a heavy impost for a poor city with some 40,000 inhabitants."

"You mean 72,000," said Sturm.

"No, there are only about 40,000 Frankfortians, the remainder of the 72,000 counted as natives are strangers."

"What does that matter?" said Sturm, becoming impatient. "The statistics say 72,000 and General Manteuffel has made his calculation accordingly."

"But if he has made an error, it seems to me that those who are charged with the execution of his order should point it out."

"That is not our affair. We are told 72,000 inhabitants, and 72,000 there therefore are. We are told 25 million florins, and 25 million florins there are also. That is all! Just fancy! the senators have declared that we can burn the town, but they will not pay the subsidy."

"I was present," said Frederic

quietly, "and the sitting was admirably conducted, with much dignity, calm, and sorrow."

"Ta ta ta ta," said Sturm. "General Manteuffel before leaving gave General Roeder the order to get in these millions. Roeder has ordered the town to pay them. The Senate has chosen to deliberate; that is its own affair. Roeder came round to me about it, it is true; but I told him that it was nothing to worry about. I said: 'The chief of my staff married in Frankfort; he knows the town like his own land, everyone's fortune even to shillings and half-pence. He will indicate five and twenty millionaires.' There are twenty-five of them here, are there not?"

"More than that," answered Frederic.

"Good; we will commence with them, and if there is a balance the others shall supply it."

"And have you reckoned on me to give you the names?"

"Certainly. All I require is twenty-five names and five and twenty addresses. Sit down there, my dear fellow, and write them out."

Frederic sat down, took a pen and wrote:

"Honour obliging me to decline to denounce my fellow citizens, I beg the illustrious Generals von Roeder and Sturm to obtain the desired information elsewhere than from myself.

"Frankfort, July 22nd, 1866.

"Frederic Baron von Bulow."

Then, rising and bowing low, he put the paper in the general's hands.

"What is this?" he asked.

"Read it, general," said Frederic.

The general read it, and gave his chief of staff a side glance.

"Ah! ah!" he said, "I see how I am answered when I ask a favour; let me see how I am answered when I command. Sit there and write——"

"Order me to charge a battery, and I will do it, but do not order me to become a tax collector."

"I have promised General Roeder to get him the names and addresses and have told him that you will supply them. He will send for the list directly. What am I to say to him?"

"You will tell him that I have refused to give it."

Sturm crossed his arms and approached Frederic.

"And do you think that I will allow a man under my orders to refuse me anything?"

"I think you will reflect that you gave me not only an unjust but a dishonouring order and you will appreciate the reason of my refusal. Let me go, general, and call a police officer: he will not refuse you, for it will be all in his work."

"Baron," replied Sturm, "I cannot reward a man of whom I have to complain." The general's face grew purple, livid marks appeared upon it, his eyes flamed.

"I will write to the king," he cried furiously, "and he will learn how his officers serve him."

"Write your account, sir, and I will write mine," answered Frederic, and he will see how his generals dishonour him."

Sturm rushed and seized his horse-whip.

"You have said dishonored, sir! You will not repeat the word, I trust?"

"Dishonored," said Frederic coldly.

Sturm gave a cry of rage and raised his whip to strike his young officer, but observing Frederic's complete calm he let it fall.

"Who threatens strikes, sir," Frederic answered, "and it is as if you had struck me."

He turned to the table and wrote a few lines. Then he opened the door of the ante-room and calling the officers who were there:

"Gentlemen," he said, "I confide this paper to your loyalty. Read what it says aloud."

"I tender my resignation as chief of General Sturm's staff and officer in the Prussian army.

"Dated at noon July 22nd, 1866.

"FREDERIC VON BULOW."

"Which means?" asked Sturm.

"Which means that I am no longer in His Majesty's service nor in yours, and that you have insulted me. Gentlemen, this man raised his horsewhip over me. And having insulted me, you owe me reparation. Keep my resignation, gentlemen, and bear witness that I am free from all military duty at the moment I tell this man that he is no longer my chief, and consequently that I am not his inferior. Sir, you have injured me mortally, and I will kill you, or you will kill me."

Sturm burst out laughing.

"You give your resignation," he said, "well, I do not accept it. Place yourself in confinement. Sir," said he, stamping his foot and walking towards Frederic, "to prison for fifteen days with you."

"You have no longer the right to give me an order," said Frederic, detaching his epaulettes.

Sturm, exasperated, livid, foaming at the mouth, again raised his whip upon the chief of his staff, but this time he slashed his cheek and shoulder with it. Frederic, who until now had held himself in, uttered a cry of rage, made a bound aside and drew his sword.

"Imbecile," shouted Sturm, with a burst of laughter, "you will be shot after a court martial."

At this Frederic lost his head completely and threw himself upon the general, but he found four officers in his path. One whispered to him: "Save yourself; we will calm him."

"And I," said Frederic, "I who have been struck; who will calm me?"

"We give you our word of honor that we have not seen the blow," said the officers.

"But *I* have *felt* it. And as I have given my word of honour that one of us must die, I must act accordingly. Adieu, gentlemen."

Two of the officers trying to follow him:

"Thunders and tempests! gentlemen," called the general after them. "Come back; no one leaves this room except this madman who will be arrested by the provost marshal."

The officers came back hanging their heads. Frederic burst out of the room. The first person he met on the stairs was the Baroness.

"Gracious heavens! what are you doing with a drawn sword?" she asked.

He put the sword in its scabbard. Then he ran to his wife and embraced her and the baby.

* * * * * *

Ten minutes later an explosion was heard in Frederic's room. The door was opened by his guard.

Frederic was lying on the floor dead, his forehead shattered by a bullet. He had left this note on the table:

"Struck in the face by General Sturm, who has refused to give me satisfaction, I could not live dishonoured. My last wish is that my wife in her widow's dress should leave this evening for Berlin, and there beg from Her Majesty the Queen the remission of the subsidy of twenty-five million florins, which the town as I testify is unable to pay.

"FREDERIC, BARON VON BULOW."

Wreck of the Copeland

THE steamer *Copeland*, of about 1,000 tons register, bound for Leith, sailed from Reykjavik, Iceland, on the morning of Friday, July 20, with a cargo of 480 ponies and eleven passengers—namely, Major-General Bevan Edwards, C. B., Captain Miles, Messrs. Williams (two), Ross, Warner, Rider Haggard, two servants, and an Icelandic lady and baby. The ponies—rough, hardy creatures averaging thirteen hands—were shipped from the beach in large boats, about ten to a boat, and then hoisted on board with the donkey engine. It may be doubted if any other breed of horses could have borne such rough and ready treatment as is meted out to those unfortunate animals without breaking their limbs or dashing themselves to pieces with fright. Once on board, they were stowed in the holds, between decks, and, to the number of about fifty, on the deck itself—being packed as closely as herrings in a barrel.

The *Copeland* left harbor in a dead calm, but by breakfast time she was laboring through a head sea and half a gale of wind from the northeast. This gale blew with ever increasing strength, and with the steadiness of a monsoon for four days. On July 23 it became so violent that the vessel could no longer plunge through it at half speed, and Captain Thompson was forced to lay her head on to the seas, merely keeping enough way to hold her in that position. The situation now had the charm of uncertainty. Owing to the presence of the ponies it was impossible to batten down the holds, for to do so would have been to suffocate them. On the other hand, the risk of riding out such a gale in a ship of which the spar deck ceased forward at the bridge, with three yawning hatchways ready to receive the water, was obvious to the most inexperienced observer. So long as the vessel's head could be kept to the seas she was fairly safe; for although she shipped water, it did not reach the holds in any quantity. But in the event of anything happening to her steering gear—which, to judge from the precautions taken to strength the chain, did not appear to be in the soundest condition—or, worse still, to the machinery—and either event might well have happened in so severe and prolonged a gale—it would certainly seem that she must have come broadside on to the seas, to fill and sink before her hatches could have been closed. The truth is that, if they can

possibly avoid it, passengers should never travel in vessels laden with the most dangerous of cargoes—live stock —unless they are specially built and fitted for the trade.

During the afternoon and night of the 23d the weather grew still worse than it had been, and the discomfort of the voyage, even to those who were not sea sick, was a thing to be remembered. It is reported that Mr. Oscar Wilde does not think much of the Atlantic. Had he been on board the *Copeland* it is probable that he would have changed his opinion. It became impossible to stand upon the wet decks without support; and to cling to a rail or rope with the spray whipping one's face, and watch the great gray seas rush down upon the ship in an endless succession, breaking over her bow with a cloud of foam, as one by one she climbed their mountainous steeps, is an occupation that in course of time affects the spirits even to the point of prolonged reflection upon one's testamentary arrangements. Below, matters were scarcely better. The only thing to do was to eat and drink, and everybody knows what that means in a heavy gale; and, when this became impossible, to lie upon the stern sofas and try to read. But who can read when every few minutes a black mass surges up over the screwed port holes, through which, tight as they are, the water squirts, and then, as the vessel settles, falls upon the poop above with a heavy thud that shakes her from stem to stern, and rushes to and fro across the decks with a long dreary wash? I believe that when a ship goes through this performance, it is known in nautical language as "dipping her tail." Certainly the *Copeland* dipped hers with such vigor that we began almost to think that it would fall off altogether.

But if the lot of the passengers was bad, and that of the unfortunate, overworked and sodden crew worse, the ponies were, after all, the most to be pitied. For days those on the deck were soaked hour after hour by the seas, pierced by the wind, frightened by the turmoil, and dashed backward and forward by the violent, unceasing motion. One by one the weaker animals succumbed, fell, and after some hours of misery, died. Anything more pitiful than the sight of these dead and dying ponies I never saw. It certainly does not seem right that the owners of vessels should be allowed to carry live stock upon the upper deck without providing them with some shelter from the weather. Their terror alone must be very great. I saw one poor animal, when a big sea came among them, make a most determined effort to spring over the railing of the hatch down into the hold. It would have succeeded had not a sailor who was by caught it by the tail and dragged it back. We lost about fifteen ponies from exposure, and it speaks well for their constitutions that we did not lose many more.

About four o'clock on the morning of the 24th the gale lulled a little, and the captain tried to drive ahead, with the result that we were nearly shaken out of our berths. Very soon, however, he abandoned the attempt, the strain on the ship and machinery being too great. As it was, the man steering was on two or three occasions thrown right over the wheel. About eleven in the

forenoon, however, the weather suddenly cleared, and we pursued our voyage without further interruption. Next morning at breakfast time we found ourselves slowly steaming through the Pentland Firth, and enveloped in a soft white mist. There are, as the reader may be aware, few more dangerous waters to navigate in foggy weather than this firth, with its violent current running at twelve knots an hour. About ten o'clock we arrived off Thurso, every few minutes loudly blowing our steam fog horn, which was answered by some invisible vessel in our vicinity. Here, as usual, a boat came off to take telegrams, its owner assuring us, as we departed, that the fog would lift with the turn of the tide.

It would have been well for us if we had stopped here, but the question of the ponies again came in. I understood that owing to the length of our voyage, which would in ordinary circumstances have been accomplished in three days and a half, only enough hay was left to provide the unfortunate animals with one more feed, whereas we could not, at the best, reach Leith in less than twenty-four hours. I believe it was this question of hay that forced the captain to take the risk and push on. All went well for nearly an hour and a half. The mist was still thick, but the sea was quite calm and the passengers, who had ceased to be sea sick, were standing about the deck talking of Iceland and salmon rivers. Presently, glancing over the stern, I saw by the track in the water that the ship's course had been altered two points. Had that alteration never been made, the *Copeland* would not have been at the bottom of the sea to-day. The captain, believing that we had passed the rocky island of Stroma, was standing in two minutes too soon. All of a sudden the curtain of the mist seemed to be drawn up before our eyes, and there—not more than a hundred yards in front of us—we saw a field of breakers, and the current boiling over the rocks; while right ahead something huge loomed up through the heavy air. We looked at each other, but I do not remember that anybody spoke. For my part, I knew what was coming, and concentrated my attention on the development of the drama. The captain, and I think the first mate, were on the bridge. The engine bell rang loudly, and the screw stopped; again the bell rang, and the engines began to go full steam astern. But, although we were only running at half speed, the way we had on and the tide overpowered the screw, and we glided quickly through the deep, quiet water toward the lip of the breakers. Another few seconds and we were in them. Then, with a succession of long and grinding, but comparatively gentle, shocks, the end came, and the *Copeland* stopped for the last time.

In an instant all was confusion—the escaping steam began to roar, the crew bustled along the decks, and the firemen tumbled up through the hatches, presently to be sent down to rake out the fires before the water reached the boilers. As for the passengers, having remarked to each other it was "a case," they went below to try and save their gear. Fortunately, with the exception of the Icelandic lady and the stewardess, there were no women on board. What would have happened if the

Copeland had been carrying five hundred emigrants, as on previous voyages, it is difficult to say. There was no panic, for the ponies could not demonstrate against death by drowning. Personally, having bundled my things into a bag, I was, in common with my fellow-passengers, preparing myself for the privations of shipwreck by filling my flask and drinking a bottle of beer, when I felt the ship slip and give a sickening quiver that caused me to finish the beer and leave the saloon with more haste than dignity. On deck sailors were trying to get out the boats, but, as somebody remarked, they almost seemed to be "screwed down," and when at last they were lifted off their supports, to have a strange propensity to go into the water any way except on a level keel; indeed, one of the passengers heard a sailor asking the steward for calks to stop the holes by which the bilge-water is allowed to escape; so altogether the prospect of rescue by means of the boats in the event of the sudden foundering of the ship was not bright. We had, however, been observed from the shore, for the dark mass that we had seen beyond the breakers proved to be the island of Stroma, the southernmost of the Orkneys, and in a few minutes, to our comfort, several good boats were lying close to us. Presently a Stroma man from one of them boarded the ship, and as we stood wondering what was going to happen next, and watching the boiling of water about our sides, he came running aft. He was a handsome-looking man, with wild eyes and flying hair, and as he came he spoke words of great weight: "Get off of this," he said. "There's five feet of water in her hold, and sixty fathoms under her stern. She's only hanging on the rocks; she'll slip off presently and go down by the stern, and drown every man of you!"

Then we began to think that it was time to make a move; and I will confess that during a somewhat varied career I never spent a more unpleasant quarter of an hour than I did between the arrival of the gentleman with warning in his voice and our final escape. It is irritating to be sucked down and drowned in the wake of a sinking ship; and in calm weather, within sight of shore, it seems unnecessary. So we called to the man in one of the boats—for our own were still dangling—and asked if they could take us off? They answered that they could if we could come down to them. This, having obtained the captain's sanction, and, what was even more necessary, a rope-ladder, we went on to do decently and in order, but still without unnecessary delay. When we were descending, Captain Miles suddenly remembered the Icelandic lady and her baby. She had vanished into the smoking-room four days before, and had been quite forgotten. Not even shipwreck had brought her out. He fetched her, and she came down into the boat, baby and all. To judge from the happy expression on her face, she did not in the least understand the position—probably, indeed, she thought the ships usually unloaded themselves after this fashion. When once I was in the boat my first care was to get up to the bow and loosen the rope by which she was made fast to the vessel, so that I could slip it at any moment. This I did, because I remembered that when the

Teuton foundered under somewhat similar circumstances on the coast of South Africa, a boat containing thirty women and children was dragged down with her. The rope was fast and nobody had a knife to cut it. Happily, in our case, this emergency did not arise.

At length everybody was embarked, including the islander who had warned us, and with some relief we got away from the ill-fated vessel. It was no more than a hundred yards to shore, but even in that weather it was not too easy to get there. A sudden reef over which the tide was boiling had to be avoided, and the landing-place consisted of sheer hard rocks that it would be impossible to attempt in unfavorable circumstances. In short, as we realized clearly enough that had there been any sea on, or even an ocean swell remaining from the gale we had experienced, our escape would have been practically impossible. No boats could live in it; to swim would not, I think, be feasible; and even supposing that the ship had held together and remained on the rocks for sufficient time to allow of its being used, there is no rocket apparatus in Stroma; nor, for that matter, is there a life-boat, a fog-horn, or a light-house. Thus, had the state of the weather been different, in the absence of a rocket apparatus, every soul on board the *Copeland* must, humanly speaking, have been drowned. Some of the islanders begged us to make this want of apparatus known in the proper quarters, and in the interest of those who may in the future find themselves in the same uncertain position, I do what I can to that end.

We landed at last, and, having saved ourselves, began to think about our baggage. It had all been dragged up on deck with really remarkable promptitude as soon as the ship struck, and now the sailors, who were still aboard, threw it into boats alongside. So that in the end we saved it all, and even a basket of food. Meanwhile, as the vessel seemed to be fixed, and gave no further signs of slipping backward into the deep water under her stern, great efforts were made to rescue some of the ponies. About a hundred of the poor creatures in the lower hold were drowned soon after the vessel struck, and it was said to be a pitiful sight to see them scrambling on to each other's backs and trying to swim for their lives as the water rushed in. Those on the upper decks, however, had a better chance. It was only necessary to throw them into the sea, and allow them to swim to a rock that at low water projects from the shore; and in this way a hundred and twenty ponies were saved before the rising of the tide made it unsafe to continue operations. Gathering confidence from the apparent stability of the ship upon her rock, two of our number who had ponies on her—Mr. Ross and Mr. Williams—determined, very much against the advice of those who had none, to return aboard and see if they could save them. We watched them get on to the ship, and before they had been there long we heard a noise something like the report of a gun, and saw her bow lift two feet or more out of the water. "She's going!" said some one; but most happily she did not go. The great rocks that pierced her amidships sunk more deeply into her vitals and held her. In doing so it pressed up the

mainmast several feet with such tremendous force that the wire ropes cracked and slipped, and the mast was shivered. Our friends and the others aboard rushed forward, intending to throw themselves into the water by the ship's bows, taking their chance of being picked up or getting to shore, which, in the state of the tide, would have been possible if she had not rolled over upon them. But fortunately, the rock checked her, and this did not become necessary.

If the wreck of the *Copeland* had been designed by Mr. Augustus Harris for the boards of Drury Lane Theatre, its surroundings could not have been more theatrically appropriate. The peculiar character of the rocks and the piles of baggage on them suggested a stage effect; so did the picnic luncheon; the picturesque islanders in the background; and, more than all, the camera, produced in the nick of time by Captain Miles from among the baggage, to the presence of which I am indebted for the situations that are reproduced here. It shows how true melodrama is to life! But it was a melodrama with a serious side to it, and we were all glad enough when at length, after about six hours' stay, we succeeded in obtaining three boats to take us and our baggage across the firth to the hotel near John-o'-Groat's, which is about seventeen miles from Wick, the terminus of the Highland Railway. On getting into our boat we were a little disturbed by one of the crew violently protesting against our putting out without food or water. We asked why food and water were necessary for a two miles' row; and it then transpired that we were liable to be carried out to the open ocean; where we might possibly drift for days. However, we started.

Our course lay under the stern of the *Copeland,* under which the tide was again sweeping in its strength, causing the water-logged vessel to move ominously. Some time before this the captain and the remainder of the crew had, as we thought, abandoned the ship, leaving more than three hundred ponies to their fate. As we passed under the stern, however, we became aware that there were still three men on board, who shouted to us to come and take them off. This, as there seemed to be nobody else to do it, we were forced to undertake. We got to the ladder, and hooked on—and a very disagreeable position it was, for in that flood-tide it was obvious that the ship might come off the rock at any moment and involve us in her utter loss. What made it worse was that a petty officer of the ship, who was one of the three men left aboard, and in whom shipwreck seemed to have induced a certain confusion of mind, would insist, in the most leisurely and deliberate manner, in letting down an apparently endless coil of rope into our boat. In vain did we adjure him, in the most vigorous and appropriate language we could command, to leave his rope and come down. He forcibly refused, and, as we could not abandon him, we had to submit and take our chance. At length he condescended to follow the rope. We got him and his companions ashore, and started again, and very thankful we were when, an hour and a half afterward, we found ourselves on the main-land. The last,

and one of the most painful sights that we saw, in connection with the unlucky *Copeland*, was that of a pony, whose leg had been broken as it was thrown overboard, standing on a rock with the water gradually rising over it. Let us hope that it was soon drowned! And so ended the story of the *Copeland*, now, doubtless, at the bottom of the sea, together with her freight of ponies.

The Marseillaise

He was a nonentity, with the soul of a hare and the shameless endurance of a beast of burden. When the malicious irony of fate cast his lot in among our black ranks, we laughed like maniacs at the thought that such absurd inept mistakes could actually be made. As for him, well—he cried. And never have I met with a man of so many tears, flowing so freely—from eyes and nose and mouth. He was like a sponge saturated with water, and then squeezed. In our ranks I have seen, indeed, men who wept, but then their tears were fire, from which even fierce wild beasts would run away. These manly tears aged the faces, but made the eyes young again. Like lava released from the red-hot bowels of the earth, they burnt an indelible track, and buried under themselves whole cities of worthless devices and shallow cares. But when this fellow began to weep, only his nose grew red, and his handkerchief became wet. Probably he used to hang out his handkerchiefs on a line to dry; how otherwise could he have supplied himself with so many?

During the whole time of exile he was continually applying to the authorities, real and imaginary, bowing, and weeping, and swearing that he was innocent, entreating them to have pity upon his youth, and promising all his life never to open his mouth except in petition and gratitude. But they laughed at him, even as did we, and called him "the wretched little pig," and would call out to him:

"Piggy, come here!"

And he would obediently run to their cell, expecting each time to hear news of his restoration to his native land. But they were only joking. They knew, as well as we did, that he was innocent. But they thought by his torments to intimidate other little pigs, as though they were not cowardly enough already. He would also come to us, impelled by an animal dread of solitude. But our faces were stern, and locked against him, and in vain he sought for the key. At an utter loss what to do, he would call us his dear comrades and friends. But we would shake our heads and say:

"Look out! Some one will hear you!"

And he was not ashamed to glance round at the door—the little pig!

Well! Could we possibly contain ourselves? No, we laughed with mouths long accustomed to laughter. Then he, emboldened and comforted, would sit down nearer to us, and converse, and weep about his dear books, which he had left upon the table, and about his mamma and little brothers, of whom he did not know whether they were alive or dead of fear and grief.

Towards the end we refused to associate with him any longer. When the hunger-strike began he was seized with terror—the most inexpressibly comical terror. He was evidently very fond of his stomach, poor little pig, and he was terribly afraid of his dear comrades, and also of the authorities. He wandered about among us in a state of perturbation, continually passing his handkerchief over his forehead, upon which something had exuded—was it tears or perspiration? Then he asked me in an irresolute manner:

"Shall you starve long?"

"For a long time," I sternly replied.

"But will you not eat anything on the sly?"

"Our mammas will send us pies," I acquiesced in all seriousness. He looked at me in doubt, nodded his head and went away with a sigh. The next day, green as a paroquet with fear, he answered:

"Dear comrades! I also will starve with you."

We replied with one voice: "Starve by yourself!"

And he did starve! We did not believe it, just as you will not believe it: we thought that he ate something on the sly, and so too thought our guards. And when towards the end of the strike he fell ill of famine-typhus, we only shrugged our shoulders and said:

"Poor little Pig!"

But one of us—he who never laughed—said grimly: "He is our comrade, let us go to him."

He was delirious, and his incoherent ravings were as piteous as the whole of his life. He talked of his dear books, of his mamma and brothers; he asked for tarts, cold as ice, tasty tarts; and he swore that he was innocent, and begged for pardon. He called on his native country—his dear France, and damn the weakness of the human heart! he rent our souls with that cry of "Dear France."

We were all in the room when he lay a-dying. He recovered his consciousness before death, and silent he lay, so small, so weak; and silent stood we his comrades. We all to a man heard him say: "When I am dead sing over me the Marseillaise."

"What dost thou say?" we exclaimed, with a shock of mingled joy and rising anger.

He repeated: "When I am dead sing over me the Marseillaise."

And it happened for the first time that his eyes were dry, but we wept, wept one and all: and our tears burned like fire from which fierce wild-beasts do flee.

He died, and we sang over him the Marseillaise. With lusty young voices we sang that great song of freedom; and threateningly the ocean re-echoed it to us, and the crests of its waves bore to his dear France pale terror, and blood-red hope.

And he became ever our watchword, that nonentity with the body of a hare, and of a beast of burden—but with the great soul of a man! On your knees, comrades and friends!

We sang! At us the rifles were aimed, while their locks clicked ominously, and the sharp points of the bayonets were menacingly turned towards our hearts. But ever louder and more joyfully resounded the threatening song, while the black coffin swayed in the tender hands of stalwarts.

We sang the Marseillaise!

Love in a Pool

In Canton, lived two rich retired Chinamen, one called Tou, the other Kouan, the former a great scientist, the latter less exalted. Formerly friends, little by little they diverged.

Tou became more stout and majestic, writing moral verses. Kouan grew gayer and gayer and wrote songs of love, wine and flowers.

Hatred gradually developed and they became as two thorny brier-hedges.

Finally they ceased to have anything to do with each other, and hung on the front of their houses a tablet bearing a formal interdiction to the inhabitants of the neighbouring home ever to cross the threshold of theirs.

They would willingly have uprooted their homes and planted them elsewhere, but unfortunately this was not possible. Tou, indeed, tried to sell his property, but he could not get his price, and, besides, it is always unpleasant to have to leave the carved walls, the polished tables, the transparent windows, the gilded trellises, the bamboo seats, the porcelain vases, the red or black lacquer cabinets, the cartouches of ancient poems, which one has taken so much pains to arrange. It is hard to hand over to another man the garden one has planted with willow, peach and plum trees, and where, in each successive springtime, one has watched the blooming of the pretty mei flower. Each of these things binds the heart of man with a thread more tenuous than silk, but as hard to break as an iron chain.

At the time when Tou and Kouan were friends, they had each built a pavilion in their garden, upon the bank of a pond that was owned jointly by them. They used to enjoy greeting each other from the balcony and smoking a drop of burning opium upon the porcelain mushroom pipe as they exchanged kindly puffs. Since they had quarreled, however, they had built a wall that cut the pond into two equal parts; only, as the pond was deep, the wall rested upon piles forming low arches, through the openings of which passed the waters that reflected the pavilion on the other side.

Each pavilion was three stories in height, with receding terraces. The roofs, curved and turned up at the corners like clogs, were covered with round, shining tiles like the scales that cover the belly of carps. On each ridge were crocketings in the form of leaves and dragons. Red varnished pillars, joined by a traceried frieze, resembling the blade of a fan, supported the elegant roof. The shafts of these pillars rested upon a little low wall, overlaid with porcelain squares arranged in pleasant symmetry, and protected by a railing of quaint design, the whole forming a sort of open gallery in front of the main building.

The same arrangement was repeated, with some variants, on each story. In the one case the porcelain tiles were replaced by *bassi-relievi* illustrating pastoral scenes; or a trellis work of curiously interlaced branches of quaintest twists took the place of the balcony, or, again, posts, painted in bright colours, formed pedestals on which were sat warty monsters and fantastic

figures, the result of the union of every sort of impossibility. The buildings each ended in a wrought and gilded cornice, with a balustrade of bamboos, selected for the regularity of the knots, and adorned in each compartment with a ball of metal.

The interior was no less sumptuous. On the walls a skilful hand had inscribed in perpendicular lines, in gilded letters upon a lacquer background, verses of Tou Chi and Li Tai Pe. A milky, opaline light filtered through the windows, fitted with panes of talc. On the window sills artistically arranged pots of peonies, Chinese primroses, white blossomed erythrinas, delighted the eye with their delicate tints. Squares of beautiful flowered silk were placed in the corners of various rooms, and on the tables, that were polished like mirrors, were always to be found toothpicks, fans, ebony pipes, brushes, and all necessary writing materials.

Artificial rockeries, in which grew willows and walnut trees, formed the foundations of these pretty buildings on the land side, while on the water side they rested on indestructible piles.

It was really a delightful spectacle to see the willows' golden filaments and silken tufts streaming down toward the surface of the water, and the brilliant colours of the pavilions reflected within a framework of multicoloured foliage.

In the crystal wave gambolled shoals of azure fishes, with golden scales; squadrons of pretty ducks with emerald necks sailed about in every direction, and the broad leaves of the nymphœa nelumbo spread out lazily under the diamond-like transparency of the lakelet, that was fed by a spring.

Save in the center, where the bottom was formed of exceedingly fine silvery sand, and where the bubbling up of the spring did not allow the water plants to take root, the rest of the pond was covered with the loveliest green carpet that ever was seen, formed by great banks of water-cress.

But for the ugly wall erected by the reciprocal enmity of the two neighbours, there certainly would not have been anywhere in the Middle Empire, which, as every one knows, covers more than three-fourths of the earth's surface, a more picturesque and more delightful garden. Each one could have increased his property with the view over his neighbour's, for here below man can have only the outward aspect of things. Such as it was, however, no sage could have wished for a pleasanter and more agreeable retreat in which to end his days in the contemplation of nature and the charm of poetry.

All Tou and Kouan had gained by their quarrel was the sight of an ugly wall, and the depriving each other of the view of the lovely pavilions, but the thought of the annoyance they had inflicted on each other consoled them.

This state of things had lasted for some years, and nettles and other weeds had overgrown the paths that led from the one house to the other. The branches of the thorn bushes had become interlaced, as though to prevent any intercommunication. It looked as though the plants were aware of the dissensions between the two former friends, and took part in them by trying to separate them still further.

Meanwhile, Tou's wife and Kouan's had each given birth to a child. Mrs. Tou was the mother of a lovely girl, and Mrs. Kouan of the handsomest boy

in the world. This happy event, which had brought joy to each household, was unknown to the other, for although their properties marched with each other, the two Chinamen lived as much apart as though their homes had been divided by the Yellow River or the Great Wall, and their mutual friends avoided making any allusion to the other family, while the respective servants had orders not to speak to each other when they met, under the pain of the lash and the cangue.

The boy was called Tchin Sing, and the girl Ju Kiouan, that is, Pearl and Jasper, names well borne out by their perfect beauty. As soon as they had grown up a little, the wall, which cut the pond into two parts and annoyingly closed the view on that side, excited their curiosity, and they asked their parents what there was on the other side of that erection so curiously placed in the centre of the stretch of water, and whose were the high trees the tops of which they could see. They were told that queer, disagreeable, unpleasant, and wholly unsociable people lived there, and that the wall had been put up as a protection against these wicked neighbours. The children were satisfied with the explanation, and having become used to the wall, did not trouble about it any more.

Ju Kiouan grew in grace and perfection. She was skilled in all the occupations of her sex, and plied her needle with incomparable adroitness. The butterflies she embroidered upon satin seemed to be alive and to flutter their wings; one would have sworn that the birds she wrought upon her canvas could be heard singing, and more than one person bent down to breathe the perfume of the flowers she scattered upon it. Nor were Ju Kiouan's accomplishments confined to this; she knew by heart the Book of Odes and the Five Rules of Life, and never did a lighter hand trace on silk paper bolder and clearer characters. The flight of dragons is not swifter than her wrist when she sprayed the black ink with a brush. She knew all the poetic modes, the Slow, the Quick, the Elevated, the Re-entering, and composed very meritorious pieces on such subjects as naturally strike a maiden: the return of the swallows, the willows in springtime, the chrysanthemums, and other kindred topics. More than one scholar who considered himself worthy of bestriding the golden steed could not have improvised as easily as she did.

Nor had Tchin Sing profited less by his studies. His name stood first on the examiners' list, and although he was still very young, he might have worn the black cap, while every mother already reflected that a youth so learned would make an excellent son-in-law and would speedily attain to the highest literary dignities. Tchin Sing, however, replied pleasantly to the negotiators who were sent to him, and said that it was too early for him to marry, that he wished to enjoy his bachelor freedom for some time longer. He refused one after the other Hon Giu, Lo Men Gli, Oma, Po Fo and other very well-bred young ladies. Never was any youth more petted and the recipient of more advances, not even the handsome Fan Gan, whose carriage was filled with sweets and oranges by the ladies as he drove home after practising shooting with his bow

and arrows. But Tchin Sing's heart appeared to be insensible to love, not through coldness, however, for by a thousand signs it was plain that he was tender-hearted; only it seemed as though he preserved the memory of some one he had known in a previous life and hoped to meet in this world. In vain were praised the willow leaf-like eyebrows, the tiny feet and the dragon-fly waists of the beauties proposed to him; he listened inattentively and as if his thoughts were elsewhere.

On her part Ju Kiouan proved no less difficult to please, and dismissed all her suitors, the one because he bowed ungracefully, the other because he was careless in his dress, a third because his handwriting was heavy and vulgar, a fourth because he did not know the Book of Verses—in a word, all suffered from some defect or other. Ju Kiouan drew such comical portraits of them that her parents were compelled to laugh at them, and as politely as possible show out the unfortunate suitor who had already imagined himself entering the Oriental pavilion.

At last the parents of the two young people began to feel some alarm at their persistent rejection of every match proposed to them. Mrs. Tou and Mrs. Kouan, no doubt preoccupied by thoughts of settling their children, dreamed at night of what they thought of all day long, and one of their dreams made a great impression upon them. Mrs. Kouan dreamed that she saw upon her son's breast a jasper stone so marvelously polished that it gleamed like a carbuncle. On the other hand, Mrs. Tou dreamed that her daughter was wearing on her neck a pearl of the finest water and of priceless value. What could these two dreams mean? Did the vision vouchsafed to Mrs. Kouan foretell for Tchin Sing the honours of the Imperial Academy, and did that of Mrs. Tou presage that Ju Kiouan was to find a treasure buried in the garden or hidden under a stone of the hearth? This view was entirely reasonable, and more than one person would have been satisfied with it, but the worthy ladies saw in these visions allusions to excellent matches soon to be made by their respective children. Unfortunately, both Tchin Sing and Ju Kiouan persisted more resolutely than ever in their refusals and thus gave the lie to the prophecies.

Although they had no dreams, Kouan and Tou were also amazed at the young people's obstinacy, marriage being a ceremony which does not usually excite prolonged aversion in youths and maidens. They fancied that their resistance might be due to some secret attachment, but Tchin Sing paid attentions to no girl, and no young man wandered by the trellises of Ju Kiouan, as both families easily ascertained after a few days' watching. Mrs. Tou and Mrs. Kouan were therefore more than ever convinced that the dreams foretold great destinies for their offspring.

The two ladies each went to consult the priest of the Temple of Fo, a handsome building with traceried roofs, round windows, a tower glittering with varnish and gilding, overlaid with votive tablets, adorned with flag-poles from which flew banners ornamented with monsters and dragons, and shaded by trees centuries old and of enormous size. After having burned gilded paper

and perfumes before the idol, the priest told Mrs. Tou that the jasper must have the pearl, and told Mrs. Kouan that the pearl must have the jasper, as their union alone could put an end to all difficulties. Little satisfied with their ambiguous reply, the two ladies returned home, without having met in the temple, by a road different from that by which they had come, and as greatly perplexed as before.

Now it happened that Ju Kiouan was one day leaning on the balcony of the rustic pavilion precisely at the moment when Tchin Sing was doing the same. The weather was fine; there was not a cloud in the sky, nor wind enough to move the leaves of the quivering aspen, and not a ripple on the glass-smooth surface of the pond. Only now and again did a carp, leaping and gambolling, make a circle that soon disappeared. The trees on the bank were so accurately reflected in it that it was hard to tell the image from the reality; they looked like a forest planted upside down and uniting its roots with those of an identical wood; like a grove that had drowned itself for love, in a word. The fish seemed to swim in the foliage, and the birds to be flying in the water.

Ju Kiouan was amusing herself watching this wonderful transparency when, on glancing at that part of the pond that lay by the dividing wall, she saw the reflection of the opposite pavilion that spread to that point through the arch. She had never noticed this optical effect, which both surprised and interested her. She could make out the red pillars, the traceried frieze, the pots of chrysanthemums, the gilded vanes, and but that they were reversed by the reflection, she could have read the inscriptions on the tablets. But what most surprised her was to see leaning upon the rail of the balcony, in a position exactly like her own, a figure so like herself that, had it not shown from the other side of the wall, she would have taken it for her own image. It was the figure of Tchin Sing, and if my reader thinks it strange that a young fellow should be mistaken for a girl, I shall reply that Tchin Sing had taken off his licentiate's cap on account of the heat, that he was still very young and beardless, and that his delicate features, his smooth complexion and his brilliant eyes might well contribute to the illusion, which for the matter of that, was not of long duration. Ju Kiouan quickly felt, by the beating of her heart, that it was no girl whose image was reflected in the wave.

Until then she had not believed that earth held the being created for her, and she had often longed to possess one of Fargana's horses, that can travel three thousand miles in one day, so that she might seek him out in unknown space. She fancied her mate did not exist in this world, and that she would never know the happiness of the union of the teals. "Never," she would say to herself, "shall I consecrate on the altar of my ancestors the drop of water and the alisma, and I shall enter alone the grove of mulberries and elms."

But when she beheld the reflection in the water she knew that her beauty had a sister, or a brother, rather, and far from being annoyed at this, she felt exceedingly happy. The pride of being unique quickly yielded to love, for

from that moment Ju Kiouan's heart was forever given. The exchange of a single glance, not even directly, but by reflection, is sufficient to bring about such a result. And let not Ju Kiouan be accused of frivolity on that account, and let it not be said that she was foolish to fall in love with a man merely for having seen his reflection in the water. What more, unless one had the advantage of long acquaintance, so that the character may be studied, does a girl see of a suitor? His outward aspect only, like his reflection in a mirror; and is it not the wont of maidens to judge of their future husbands by the enamel of their teeth and the cut of their nails?

Tchin Sing also had caught sight of the wondrous beauty.

"Am I dreaming, while awake?" he exclaimed. "Surely that lovely face sparkling in the crystal water was formed of the moon's silvery beams and of the most subtile aroma of the flowers on some spring night. Though I have never seen her, I recognize her: she is indeed the woman whose image is engraved on my heart, the fair unknown to whom I address my distichs and my quatrains."

Tchin Sing had got so far in his monologue, when he heard his father's voice calling to him.

"My son," said the old gentleman, "my friend Wing has called to propose a very rich and suitable match for you. The young lady has imperial blood in her veins; she is famous for her beauty, and has all the qualities fitted to make a husband happy."

Tchin Sing, full of the incident of the pavilion and burning with love for the girl whose image he had seen in the water, refused unhesitatingly. His father, transported with rage, lost his temper and hurled the fiercest threats at him.

"You scoundrel," cried the old gentleman, "if you persist in your obstinacy, I shall ask the magistrate to have you imprisoned in the fortress held by the Western barbarians, and from which nothing can be seen save rocks washed by the waves, mountains capped with clouds, and dark waters traversed by those monstrous inventions of the evil genii, which travel with paddles and vomit fetid smoke. There you will have leisure to reflect and to mend your ways."

These threats did not greatly frighten Tchin Sing, who replied that he was ready to accept the first bride that came along, provided it were not the one now offered him.

The next day, at the same hour, he returned to the rural pavilion, and as on the previous day, he leaned over the railing of the balcony. In a few minutes, he saw Ju Kiouan's image reflected on the water like a bouquet of submerged flowers. The young man put his hand to his heart, kissed the tips of his fingers and blew the kiss to the reflection with a gesture full of grace and love.

A smile of happiness bloomed like a pomegranate bud in the transparent water, and proved to Tchin Sing that he was not indifferent to the fair unknown, but as it is not possible to carry on a long conversation with a reflection of which the body is invisible, he made a sign that he was about to write, and returned into the pavilion. A few minutes later he came out, holding a square of tinted silver paper on which

he had improvised a declaration of love in seven syllables. He rolled it up and enclosed it in the calyx of a flower, which he put into a broad water-lily leaf, and placed the parcel gently on the water.

A light air, that arose most seasonably, drove the love letter towards one of the bays in the wall, so that all Ju Kiouan had to do was to bend and pick it up. Fearful of being surprised, she withdrew to her most secret chamber, and there read with infinite pleasure the expressions of love and the metaphors of which Tchin Sing had made use. Besides the delight of being loved, she had the satisfaction of being so by a scholarly man, for the beauty of the handwriting, the selection of the words, the excellence of the rhymes and the brilliancy of the images testified to his admirable education. What most struck her was the name Tchin Sing. She had too often heard her mother tell of her dreaming of a pearl not to be struck by this coincidence, and she did not for a moment doubt but that Tchin Sing was the husband Heaven meant for her.

The next day, as the wind had gone round, Ju Kiouan sent in the same way towards the opposite pavilion, a reply in verse, in which, in spite of the modesty natural in a girl, it was easy to read that she shared Tchin Sing's love.

As he read the signature to the letter, Tchin could not repress an exclamation of surprise:

"Jasper! Was not that the gem my mother saw in her dream gleaming upon my breast like a carbuncle? Decidedly, I must call at that house, for it is there that dwells the bride promised me by the spirits of night."

But as he started to go out, he remembered the dissensions which divided the owners, and the prohibitions inscribed upon the tablets. Not knowing what he had best do, he told the whole story to his mother. Meanwhile Ju Kiouan had told her's everything that had passed. The names Jasper and Pearl appeared to the two ladies to solve the riddle, and they returned to the Temple of Fo to consult the priest.

The priest replied that they had rightly interpreted the dream, and that if they did not conform to it they would incur the wrath of Heaven. Moved by the entreaties of the two mothers, and also by some presents they gave him, he undertook to talk to both Tou and Kouan; and he so neatly trapped them that, when they learned who were the parties to the proposed match, they had already given their consent.

When the pair met, the two old friends wondered at having quarrelled for such slight reasons, and felt how much they had lost by their separation. The wedding took place, and Pearl and Jasper were at last able to converse in a more agreeable way than by the medium of their reflections. Were they any the happier for it? I dare not venture to affirm it, for happiness is often but an image in water.

King of the Jungle

I was a boy of seventeen, on a hunting expedition in the marsh-lands of Corumbà, in Brazil.

One day I found myself camping on an island with a party of Bolivians. We were four in all, Alba and Lopez, two explorer-friends whom I had begged to take me along—I was always in quest of thrills—and Timo, a very shrewd guide. We all had come from the border, intent upon killing the fleet and bloodthirsty jaguar. Its domain, a heavy thicket well beyond an effervescent lake of mud that surrounded us, was scarcely three miles west of our island.

It was nine in the morning, and we figured that noon was about the best time to go after jaguar, it being the hour when they are heavy with their meal. Timo wanted us to get started without delay, for the marshes are very difficult to traverse on foot. Although the soil was only slightly submerged and dotted with small mounds, it took us over two hours to go across. We saw on the way carcasses of alligators and the remnants of a deer. Occasionally we had to avoid crocodiles stupidly trying to hide so as to surprise and get us.

Alba and Lopez, wading strenuously through the swamps, and leaving me a good distance behind, caught up with Timo, who never let anybody get ahead of him, and waited for me. We had come to a place where a coarse, waist-high, yellowish sedge hid dangerous quagmires, detectable by the degree of resistance the ground offered when the grass was pulled. Two or three times the guide made a sign to stop, and Alba, alert and prepared for any eventuality, cautioned me to hold my gun in readiness. I could not see anything, but heard a swift rustling. Although I knew this meant snakes of the constrictor family, I did not pay much attention. The three men near me were ample protection. Furthermore, I had once killed a big snake. I had shot it down from a branch, with so little risk that it had furnished me no more excitement than if I had bagged a cackling hen.

We reached a wooded and solid ground. Here was abundant grass and rushes, where vipers undoubtedly thrived. Timo had drawn a poisoned arrow which he handled with extreme care, and, pointing reassuringly at this weapon, advised us to show no fear in case we should encounter a boa. His warning told me that he had seen unequivocal signs of this reptile. As to the vipers, I knew that our boots were sufficient guarantee against their attacks, so I was not alarmed by anything, except, maybe, by the silence of the forest or the sudden flight of a bird, which never failed to bring an image to my mind—that of a surprised prey escaping in the nick of time. It was strange, but this thought always occurred to me, and made me imagine myself in a similar situation. I learned afterwards that this feeling was common to most novices in the jungle. From afar came a noise like the crackling of dry sticks.

"To the trees, quick!" shouted Timo. With a leap he started up a tree; Alba, Lopez and I climbed for our lives, and a few seconds later, beneath us, we

heard an avalanche of animals pass, gnashing their tusks. At the same time a strange moan echoed nearby in the jungle, and the guide, now back on the ground, urged us all to move forward with him. "Come!" he said. "Get your guns ready—something's happening there!" This stirred me to action, and, my young flesh tingling, this time with fear of the unknown, I followed with my friends the path recently laid by the fleeing animals. We reached an amphitheater, in the center of which was a lagoon where light hardly penetrated. The trees were enormous, and their uniform thickness was impressive. A meteorite, fallen centuries ago, perhaps, rose at one end through a thick, moist covering of leaves which deadened the sound of footsteps.

The lagoon, fed possibly from underground springs, was hidden by a dark mantle of moss, and slept there silently, mysteriously, surrounded by a setting a hundred times as gorgeous as anything I had yet seen in tropical display of majesty. A gigantic *Santa-Marìa,* felled undoubtedly by a thunderbolt, almost formed a bridge over the lagoon, and, without the prodigious mane of branches, could have been used for one.

In its fall the tree had pulled over a net of leafless creepers, many of which still clung tightly to the tops of the mighty neighbours, thus giving a crude impression of the mast of a vessel hanging by its rigging.

We perceived on the opposite side something that chilled the blood in our veins. An enormous boa, at least thirty-five feet in length, half concealed by a screen of lianas, rose several yards from the ground in a threatening attitude. Its mouth opened spasmodically, and its sinister eyes peered into a small patch where there was probably a foe. A group of fig trees of gnarly, writhing boles edged the patch.

The taut neck of the serpent receded slowly, till it fell almost back upon the monstrous coiled body, undoubtedly crushing its prey. Foam drooled out of its mouth and slobbered down its coils, which contracted and expanded with terrifying force and machine-like regularity. Lopez was dazed, and Alba looked as if hypnotized by what we saw. Timo, leaning against a trunk, seemed to have forgotten us.

The boa was becoming fearfully enraged. A loud hiss came from its nostrils. Once or twice it made as if to leap forward, but it preferred to spare its prey, and withdrew further back. Its body, curled as it was now, had the appearance of a barrel whimsically painted. Its movements backward resembled the bouncing of a roly-poly toy. In this manner it managed to come out of the labyrinth of lianas, and we could see it clearly.

A fan of sunlight penetrated through a narrow gash in the canopied ceiling of thickly-leaved branches seventy feet overhead, and a beam of light struck the body of the monster. Indistinctly we distinguished something that made us hold our breath. Step by step a superb jaguar, large as an African lioness, advanced—its eyes afire, staring at its enemy, lashing its frizzled tail now quietly, now fretfully, doggedly moving forward as the serpent retreated.

"I understand now!" I heard Alba murmur; he was nervously fingering the trigger of his gun. "It has killed the mate."

The boa's long neck swayed. Drooling more than ever and raising a third of its body, it tried in vain to frighten its foe. Now it lifted itself to an incredible height and disclosed three gory masses, which Timo could still recognize in spite of the loathsome drivel which covered them.

"The cubs of the jaguar—and a peccary," he said in a low voice.

To our surprise the big feline then lay down on the ground, and, still looking fixedly at the boa, yawned dolefully and waited. The serpent grew more calm now, and its greediness finally triumphed over its suspicions. For a moment it drew its looped neck along the water, as if it wanted to moisten its foaming jaws. Then, giving one last glance toward the jaguar, which now looked at it furiously, it made horrible efforts to vomit, and its mouth became white with froth which it smeared on its victims before beginning to swallow them with fierce and repulsive avidity. . . .

The jaguar trembled nervously, and several times made as if to spring, but returned again to its former patient attitude. The peccary, which was the last to disappear, was exceptionally large and gave the serpent some trouble. Its jaws expanded more, until it seemed as though they would burst. It was certain that it had not crushed its prey thoroughly, perhaps because of the presence of its foe, which, again on its feet, followed the movements of the serpent with eyes afire and hair on end. The tail no longer beat against its flanks. It bent at the tip while the rest of it stiffened.

Perceiving this, the boa hissed again with blood-curdling fury and even threatened to attack, but it seemed tired and remained on the defensive. A heavy scrambling was heard from beyond, and an instant later a tapir reached the clearing. Unhesitatingly it went to the lagoon. With devastating swiftness the serpent fell on it.

For an instant the animal disappeared in the coils of the monster, but it suddenly was freed, and, unaware even now of the presence of its other enemy, the jaguar, darted away like lightning. The jaguar had taken advantage of the very moment when the boa was preparing to crush its new victim. It had hurled itself upon the serpent, clawed its neck savagely, and withdrawn, apparently dissatisfied with its hold.

We human spectators, surprised by the intruder, had not seen the initial attack, so swift was it. The jaguar, maddened by this contact, was roaring hoarsely, seeking a good position from which to spring again.

The reptile was apparently seized with stupour at that moment, and, although wounded, rather than charge according to tradition, it hastened to look for shelter. For a second it faced its enemy, but then, suddenly, slid to the foot of a tree. It was about to reach for a branch when the jaguar pounced again astride its upraised and already weakened neck. The boa struggled to stay erect while the jaguar fought to drag it down to the ground. But the jaguar failed. Its hind claws dug for a minute into the serpent, then slipped, and the whole animal was borne aloft, barely holding itself by its teeth.

That was the end. The boa thrust the animal into its coils; they tightened

with furious strength. A fearful roar made the air vibrate for an instant, and then, through panting hisses, was heard a gruesome cracking of bones and a moan that grew more and more faint and sickening.

Alba could restrain his impulse no longer, and ran to the place of the fight. We followed, trying to dissuade him. When he was ten yards away, he fired once, twice, three times—shattering the head of the serpent at the first shot. For a moment the boa loosened its coils, but then clasped them even more tightly, till they were coloured by the blood of its victim. . . . Squirming convulsively in the death spasm, it reached the lake and disappeared under the thick covering of moss.

The water was still quivering when we made our way out, aghast with emotion and exhausted by the heat under those trees. Lopez and Alba looked at each other. "If I am not mistaken," said the first, "you want to go back—and I do too."

"Yes," Alba replied. "This has demoralized me—and I think it is the same with you," he said, turning to me. It was so. Furthermore, I could not have shot a jaguar that day. I was too much in sympathy with the beast, after what I had seen.

"Timo!" Alba called as we were passing the place where we had had to seek cover in the trees. "What were those animals about which you warned us before?"

"White-lipped peccaries, *niño*—like the one the boa ate," replied the guide, himself pale with emotion. "I did not see them coming, but I heard them. They were frightened, and they would have torn us to pieces if we hadn't escaped just in time."

"Why didn't they attack the boa, then?" I asked. "I thought those animals defended themselves successfully against all others."

"All the animals from the forest flee from the great serpents," Timo replied, "and this time you may be sure that the boa caught their leader. Otherwise they wouldn't have run like that—I have seen horses and men ripped by the peccaries."

A Passion in the Desert

(Une Passion dans le Désert)

"The sight was fearful!" she cried, as we quit M. Martin's menagerie.

She had seen that fearless wild-beast tamer going through his marvelous performance in a cage of hyenas.

"How can it be possible," she went on, "to so tame those creatures as to be sure of them?"

"It is an enigma to you," I replied, "yet still it is naturally a fact."

"Ah!" she exclaimed, her lips quivering incredulously.

"You think, then, that beasts are without feeling?" I asked. "Be assured by me that they are taught by us all of our vices and virtues—those of civilization."

Amazement was expressed in her look.

"At the time I first saw M. Martin, I, like you, exclaimed my amazement,"

I went on. "It happened that I was seated alongside an old soldier, his right leg amputated, who had attracted my notice by his appearance as I went into the show. His face showed the dauntless look of the Napoleonic wars, disfigured as it was with battle's scars. This old hero, besides, had a frank, jolly style which, wherever I come across it, is always attractive to me. Undoubtedly he was one of those old campaigners who are surprised at nothing, who can make a jest on the last grimaces of a dying comrade, or will bury his friend or rifle his body with gayety; give a challenge to every bullet with composure; make a short shriving for himself or others; and usually, as the rule goes, fraternizing with the Devil. He closely watched the proprietor of the exhibition as he entered the cage, curling his lip, that peculiar sign of contemptuous satire which better informed men assume to signify how superior they are to the dupes. The veteran smiled when I exclaimed at the cool daring of M. Martin, he gave a toss of the head, and, with a knowing grimace, said: 'An old game!'

"'Old game,' said I, 'what do you mean? You will greatly oblige me if you can explain the secret of the mysterious power of this man.'

"We came to be acquainted after a while and went to dine at the first café we saw after quitting the menagerie. After a bottle of champagne with our dessert, which burnished up his memory and rendered it very vivid, he narrated a circumstance in his early history which showed very conclusively that he had ample reason to style M. Martin's performance 'an old game.'"

When we arrived at her house she so teased me, and was withal so charming, making me a number of so pretty promises, that I consented to write the yarn narrated by the veteran hero for her behoof. On the morrow I sent her this adventure, which might well be headed: "The French in Egypt."

During the expedition to Upper Egypt under General Desaix, a Provençal soldier, who had fallen into the clutches of the Maugrabins, was marched by these marauders, these tireless Arabs, into the deserts lying beyond the cataracts of the Nile.

So as to put a sufficient distance between themselves and the French army, to insure their greater safety, the Maugrabins made forced marches and rested only during the night. They then encamped around a well shaded by palm-trees, under which they had previously concealed a store of provisions. Never dreaming that their prisoner would think of escaping, they satisfied themselves by merely tying his hands, then lay down to sleep, after having regaled themselves on a few dates and given provender to their horses.

When the courageous Provençal noted that they slept soundly and could no longer watch his movements, he made use of his teeth to steal a scimitar, steadied the blade between his knees, cut through the thongs which bound his hands; in an instant he was free. He at once seized a carbine and a long dirk, then took the precaution of providing himself with a stock of dried dates, a small bag of oats, some powder and bullets, and hung a scimitar around his waist, mounted one of the horses and spurred on in the direction in which he supposed the French army to be. So impatient was he to see a bivouac again

that he pressed on the already tired courser at such speed that its flanks were lacerated with the spurs, and soon the poor animal, utterly exhausted, fell dead, leaving the Frenchman alone in the midst of the desert.

After walking for a long time in the sand, with all the courage and firmness of an escaped convict, the soldier was obliged to stop, as the day had already come to an end. Despite the beauty of an Oriental night, with its exquisite sky, he felt that he could not, though he fain would, continue on his weary way. Fortunately he had come to a small eminence, on the summit of which grew a few palm-trees whose verdure shot into the air and could be seen from afar; this had brought hope and consolation to his heart.

His fatigue was so great that he threw himself down on a block of granite capriciously fashioned by Nature into the semblance of a camp-bed, and, without taking any precaution for defense, was soon fast in sleep. He had made the sacrifice of his life. His last waking thought was one of regret. He repented having left the Maugrabins, whose nomad life seemed to smile on him now that he was far from them and from all hope of succor.

He was awakened by the sun, whose pitiless rays fell with their intense heat on the granite, and produced a most intolerable sense of torridness—for he had most stupidly placed himself inversely to the shadow cast by the verdant and majestic fronds of the palm-trees. He looked at these solitary monarchs and shuddered—they reminded him of the graceful shafts crowned with waving foliage which characterize the Saracenic columns in the cathedral of Arles.

But when, after counting the palm-trees, he cast his eyes around him, the most horrible despair took possession of his soul. The dark, forbidding sands of the desert spread farther than sight could reach in every direction, and glittered with a dull luster like steel struck by light. It was a limitless ocean that he saw. It might have been a sea of ice or a chain of lakes that lay mirrored around him. A fiery vapor carried in streaks formed perpetual heat-waves over this heaving continent. The sky was glowing with an Oriental splendor of insupportable translucence, disappointing, inasmuch as it leaves naught for the imagination to exceed. Heaven, earth, both were on fire.

The silence was awful in its wild, tremendous majesty. Infinitude, immensity, closed in upon the soul from every side. Not a cloud in the sky, not a breath in the air, not a rift on the bosom of the sand, which was ever moving in ever-diminishing wavelets, scarcely disturbing the surface; the horizon fell into space, traced by a slim line of light, definite as the edge of a saber—like as in summer seas a beam of light just divides the earth from the heaven which meets it.

The Provençal threw his arms around the trunk of one of the palm-trees, as though it were the body of a friend; and there, in the shelter of its slender, straight shadow cast by it upon the granite, he wept. Then sitting down he remained motionless, contemplating with awful dread the implacable scene which Nature stretched out before him. He cried aloud to measure the solitude. His voice, lost in the hollows of the

hillocks, sounded in the distance with a faint resonance, but aroused no echo—the echo was in the soldier's heart. The Provençal was two-and-twenty; he loaded his carbine.

"Time enough yet," he muttered to himself, laying on the ground the weapon which alone could give him deliverance.

Looking by turns at the burnished black expanse and the blue immensity of the sky, the soldier dreamed of France—he smelt with delight, in his longing fancy, the gutters of Paris—he remembered the towns through which he had passed, the faces of his fellow-soldiers, the most trivial incidents of his life.

His Southern imagination saw the stones of his dearly loved Provence in the undulating play of the heat which spread in waves over the outspread sheet of the desert. Fearing the dangers of this so cruel mirage, he went down the opposite side of the knoll to that up which he had come on the previous day. How great was his joy when he discerned a natural grotto, formed of immense blocks of granite, the foundation of the rising ground. The remains of a rug showed that this place had at one time been inhabited; a short distance therefrom were some date-palms laden with fruit. There arose in his heart that instinct which binds us to life. He now hoped to live long enough to see the passing of some wandering Arabs, who should pass that way; perhaps, who should say? he might hear the sound of cannon; for at that time Bonaparte was traversing Egypt.

These thoughts inspired him with new life. The palm-tree near him seemed to bend under its weight of ripe fruit. The Frenchman shook down some of the clusters, and, when he tasted the unhoped-for manna, he felt convinced that the palms had been cultivated by some former inhabitant—the rich and luscious flavor of the fresh meat of the dates was an attestation of the care of his unknown predecessor. Like all Provençals, he passed from the gloom of dark despair to an almost insane joy.

He went up again, running, to the top of the hillock, where he devoted the remainder of the day to cutting down one of the sterile palm-trees which, the previous night, had served him as a shelter. A vague memory made him think of the wild beasts of the desert. He foresaw that they would most likely come to drink at the spring which was visible, bubbling through the sand, at the base of the rock, but lost itself in the desert farther down. He resolved to guard himself against their unwelcome visits to his hermitage by felling a tree which should fall across the entrance.

Despite his diligence and the strength which the dread of being devoured in his sleep lent him, he was unable to cut the palm-tree in pieces during the day, but he was successful in felling it. At eventide the monarch of the desert tumbled down; the noise of its falling resounded far and wide like the moan from Solitude's bosom; the soldier shuddered as though he heard a voice predicting evil.

But like an heir who mourns not his parent's decease, he stripped off from this beautiful tree the arching green fronds, its poetic adornment, and used them in forming a couch on which to rest.

Fatigued by his labors, he soon fell

asleep under the red vault of his damp, cool cave.

In the middle of the night his sleep was disturbed by an extraordinary sound. He sat up; the profound silence that reigned around enabled him to distinguish the alternating rhythm of a respiration whose savage energy it was impossible could be that of a human being.

A terrible terror, increased yet more by the silence, the darkness, his racing fancy, froze his heart within him. He felt his hair rise on end, as his eyes, dilated to their utmost, perceived through the gloom two faint amber lights. At first he attributed these lights to the delusion of his vision, but presently the vivid brilliance of the night aided him to gradually distinguish the objects around him in the cave, when he saw, within the space of two feet of him, a huge animal lying at rest. Was it a lion? Was it a tiger? Was it a crocodile?

The Provençal was not sufficiently well educated to know under what subspecies his enemy should be classed; his fear was but the greater because his ignorance led him to imagine every terror at once. He endured most cruel tortures as he noted every variation of the breathing which was so near him; he dared not make the slightest movement.

An odor, pungent like that of a fox, but more penetrating as it were, more profound, filled the cavern. When the Provençal became sensible of this, his terror reached the climax, for now he could no longer doubt the proximity of a terrible companion, whose royal lair he had utilized as a bivouac.

Presently the reflection of the moon, as it slowly descended to the horizon, lighted up the den, rendering gradually visible the gleaming, resplendent, and spotted skin of a panther.

This lion of Egypt lay asleep curled up like a great dog, the peaceful possessor of a kennel at the door of some sumptuous hôtel; its eyes opened for a moment, then closed again; its face was turned toward the Frenchman. A thousand confused thoughts passed through the mind of the tiger's prisoner. Should he, as he at first thought of doing, kill it with a shot from his carbine? But he saw plainly that there was not room enough in which to take proper aim; the muzzle would have extended beyond the animal—the bullet would miss the mark. And what if it were to awake!—this fear kept him motionless and rigid.

He heard the pulsing of his heart beating in the so dread silence and he cursed the too violent pulsations which his surging blood brought on, lest they should awaken from sleep the dreadful creature—that slumber which gave him time to think and plan over his escape.

Twice did he place his hand upon his scimitar, intending to cut off his enemy's head; but the difficulty of severing the close-haired skin caused him to renounce this daring attempt. To miss was *certain* death. He preferred the chances of a fair fight, and made up his mind to await the daylight. The dawn did not give him long to wait. It came.

He could now examine the panther at his ease; its muzzle was smeared with blood.

"It's had a good dinner," he said, without troubling himself to speculate whether the feast might have been of human flesh or not. "It won't be hungry when it wakes."

It was a female. The fur on her belly

and thighs was glistening white. Many small spots like velvet formed beautiful bracelets round her paws; her sinuous tail was also white, ending in black rings. The back of her dress was yellow, like unburnished gold, very lissome and soft, and had the characteristic blotches in the shape of pretty rosettes, which distinguish the panther from every other species *felis*.

This formidable hostess lay tranquilly snoring in an attitude as graceful and easy as that of a cat on the cushions of an ottoman. Her bloody paws, nervous and well armed, were stretched out before her head, which rested on the back of them, while from her muzzle radiated her straight, slender whiskers, like threads of silver.

If he had seen her lying thus, imprisoned in a cage, the Provençal would doubtless have admired the grace of the creature and the vivid contrasts of color which gave her robe an imperial splendor; but just then his sight was jaundiced by sinister forebodings.

The presence of the panther, even asleep, had the same effect upon him as the magnetic eyes of a snake are said to have on the nightingale.

The soldier's courage oozed away in the presence of this silent danger, though he was a man who gathered courage at the mouths of cannon belching forth shot and shell. And yet a bold thought brought daylight to his soul and sealed up the source from whence issued the cold sweat which gathered on his brow. Like men driven to bay, who defy death and offer their bodies to the smiter, so he, seeing in this merely a tragic episode, resolved to play his part with honor to the last.

"The day before yesterday," said he, "the Arabs might have killed me."

So considering himself as already dead, he waited bravely, but with anxious curiosity, the awakening of his enemy.

When the sun appeared the panther suddenly opened her eyes; then she stretched out her paws with energy, as if to get rid of cramp. Presently she yawned and showed the frightful armament of her teeth, and the pointed tongue rough as a rasp.

"She is like a dainty woman,"[1] thought the Frenchman, seeing her rolling and turning herself about so softly and coquettishly. She licked off the blood from her paws and muzzle, and scratched her head with reiterated grace of movement.

"Good, make your little toilet," said the Frenchman to himself; he recovered his gayety with his courage. "We are presently about to give each other good-morning," and he felt for the short poniard that he had abstracted from the Maugrabins. At this instant the panther turned her head toward him and gazed fixedly at him, without otherwise moving.

The rigidity of her metallic eyes and their insupportable luster made him shudder. The beast approached him; he looked at her caressingly, staring into those bright eyes in an effort to magnetize her—to sooth her. He let her come quite close to him before stirring; then with a movement both gentle and amorous, as though he were caressing the most beautiful of women, he passed his hand over her whole body, from the head to the tail, scratching the flexible vertebræ which divided the yellow back

[1] *Petite maîtresse.*

of the panther. The animal slightly moved her tail voluptuously, and her eyes grew soft and gentle; and when for the third time the Frenchman had accomplished this interested flattery, she gave vent to purrings like those by which cats express their pleasure; but they issued from a throat so deep, so powerful, that they resounded through the cave like the last chords of an organ rolling along the vaulted roof of a church. The Provençal, seeing the value of his caresses, redoubled them until they completely soothed and lulled this imperious courtesan.

When he felt assured that he had extinguished the ferocity of his capricious companion, whose hunger had so luckily been appeased the day before, he got up to leave the grotto. The panther let him go out, but when he reached the summit of the little knoll she sprang up and bounded after him with the lightness of a sparrow hopping from twig to twig on a tree, and rubbed against his legs, arching her back after the manner of a domestic cat. Then, regarding her guest with eyes whose glare had somewhat softened, she gave vent to that wild cry which naturalists compare to the grating of a saw.

"Madame is exacting," said the Frenchman, smiling.

He was bold enough to play with her ears; he stroked her belly and scratched her head good and hard with his nails. He was encouraged with his success, and tickled her skull with the point of his dagger, watching for an opportune moment to kill her, but the hardness of the bone made him tremble, dreading failure.

The sultana of the desert showed herself gracious to her slave; she lifted her head, stretched out her neck, and betrayed her delight by the tranquillity of her relaxed attitude. It suddenly occurred to the soldier that, to slay this savage princess with one blow, he must stab deep in the throat.

He raised the blade, when the panther, satisfied, no doubt, threw herself gracefully at his feet and glanced up at him with a look in which, despite her natural ferocity, a glimmer of good-will was apparent. The poor Provençal, thus frustrated for the nonce, ate his dates as he leaned against one of the palm-trees, casting an interrogating glance from time to time across the desert, in quest of some deliverer, and on his terrible companion, watching the chances of her uncertain clemency.

The panther looked at the place where the date-stones fell; and, each time he threw one, she examined the Frenchman with an eye of commercial distrust. However, the examination seemed to be favorable to him, for, when he had eaten his frugal meal, she licked his boots with her powerful, rough tongue, cleaning off the dust which was caked in the wrinkles in a marvelous manner.

"Ah! but how when she is really hungry?" thought the Provençal. In spite of the shudder caused by this thought, his attention was curiously drawn to the symmetrical proportions of the animal, which was certainly one of the most splendid specimens of its race. He began to measure them with his eye. She was three feet in height at the shoulders and four feet in length, not counting her tail; this powerful weapon was nearly three feet long, and rounded like a cudgel. The head, large as that of a lioness, was distinguished by an intelligent, crafty expression. The cold cruelty of the tiger dominated, and

yet it bore a vague resemblance to the face of a wanton woman. Indeed, the countenance of this solitary queen had something of the gayety of a Nero in his cups; her thirst for blood was slaked, now she wished for amusement.

The soldier tried if he might walk up and down, the panther left him freedom, contenting herself with following him with her eyes, less like a faithful dog watching his master's movements with affectionate solicitude, than a huge Angora cat uneasy and suspicious of every movement.

When he looked around he saw, by the spring, the carcass of his horse; the panther had dragged the remains all that distance, and had eaten about two-thirds of it already. The sight reassured the Frenchman, it made it easy to explain the panther's absence and the forbearance she had shown him while he slept.

This first good luck emboldened the soldier to think of the future. He conceived the wild idea of continuing on good terms with his companion and to share her home, to try every means to tame her and endeavor to turn her good graces to his account.

With these thoughts he returned to her side, and had the unspeakable joy of seeing her wag her tail with an almost imperceptible motion as he approached. He sat down beside her, fearlessly, and they began to play together. He took her paws and muzzle, twisted her ears, rolled her over on her back, and stroked her warm, delicate flanks. She allowed him to do whatever he liked, and, when he began to stroke the fur on her feet, she carefully drew in her murderously savage claws, which were sharp and curved like a Damascus sword.

The Frenchman kept one hand on his poniard, and thought to watch his chance to plunge it into the belly of the too confiding animal; but he was fearful lest he might be strangled in her last convulsive struggles; besides this, he felt in his heart a sort of remorse which bade him respect this hitherto inoffensive creature that had done him no hurt. He seemed to have found a friend in the boundless desert, and, half-unconsciously, his mind reverted to his old sweetheart whom he had, in derision, nicknamed "Mignonne" by way of contrast because she was so furiously jealous; during the whole period of their intercourse he lived in dread of the knife with which she ever threatened him.

This recollection of his youthful days suggested the idea of making the panther answer to this name, now that he began to admire with less fear her graceful swiftness, agility, and softness. Toward the close of the day he had so familiarized himself with his perilous position that he was half in love with his dangerous situation and its painfulness. At last his companion had grown so far tamed that she had caught the habit of looking up at him whenever he called in a falsetto voice "Mignonne."

At the setting of the sun Mignonne, several times in succession, gave a long, deep, melancholy cry.

"She has been well brought up," thought the light-hearted soldier; "she says her prayers." But this jesting thought only occurred to him when he noticed that his companion still retained her pacific attitude.

"Come, my little blonde, I'll let you go to bed first," he said to her, counting on the activity of his own legs to

run away as soon as she was asleep; to reach as great distance as possible, and seek some other shelter for the night.

With the utmost impatience the soldier waited the hour of his flight. When it arrived he started off vigorously in the direction of the Nile; but hardly had he made a quarter of a league in the sand when he heard the panther bounding after him; at intervals giving out that saw-like cry which was more terrible than her leaping gait.

"Ah!" said he, "she's fallen in love with me; she has never met anyone before; it is really flattering to be her first love."

So thinking he fell into one of those treacherous quicksands, so menacing to travelers, and from which it is an impossibility to save one's self. Finding himself caught he gave a shriek of alarm. The panther, seizing his collar with her teeth, and springing vigorously backward, drew him as by magic out of the sucking sand.

"Ah, Mignonne!" cried the soldier, enthusiastically kissing her; "we are bound to each other now—for life and death! But no tricks, mind!" and he retraced his steps.

From that time the desert was inhabited for him. It contained a being to whom he could talk and whose ferocity was now lulled into gentleness, although he could not explain to himself this strange friendship. Anxious as he was to keep awake and on guard, as it were, he gradually succumbed to his excessive fatigue of body and mind; he threw himself on the floor of the cave and slept soundly.

On awakening Mignonne was absent; he climbed the hillock and afar off saw her returning in the long bounds characteristic of those animals, who cannot run owing to the extreme flexibility of the vertebral column.

Mignonne arrived with bloody jaws; she received the wonted caresses, the tribute her slave hastened to pay, and showed by her purring how transported she was. Her eyes, full of languor, rested more kindly on the Provençal than on the previous day, and he addressed her as he would have done a domestic animal.

"Ah! mademoiselle, you're a nice girl, ain't you? Just see now! we like to be petted, don't we? Are you not ashamed of yourself? So you've been eating some Arab or other, eh? well, that doesn't matter. They're animals, the same as you are; but don't take to crunching up a Frenchman, bear that in mind, or I shall not love you any longer."

She played like a dog with its master, allowing herself to be rolled over, knocked about, stroked, and the rest, alternately; at times she would coax him to play by putting her paw upon his knee and making a pretty gesture of solicitation.

Some days passed in this manner. This companionship allowed the Provençal to properly appreciate the sublime beauties of the desert. He had now discovered in the rising and setting of the sun sights utterly unknown to the world. He knew what it was to tremble when over his head he heard the hiss of a bird's wing, which occurred so rarely, or when he saw the clouds changing like many-colored travelers melting into each other. In the night-time he studied the effects of the moon upon the ocean of sand, where the simoom made waves swift of movement and rapid in their

changes. He lived the life of the East; he marveled at its wonderful pomp; then, after having reveled in the sight of a hurricane over the plain where the madly whirling sands made red, dry mists, and death-bearing clouds, he would welcome the night with joy, for then fell the blissful freshness of the light of the stars, and he listened to imaginary music in the skies.

Thus solitude taught him to unroll the treasures of dreams. He passed long hours in remembering mere nothings—trifles, and comparing his past life with the present.

In the end he grew passionately fond of his panther; for some sort of affection was a necessity.

Whether it was that his own will powerfully projected had modified that of his companion, or whether, because she had found abundant food in her predatory excursions in the desert, she respected the man's life, he feared no longer for it, for she became so exceedingly tame.

Most of his time he devoted to sleep, but he was compelled to watch like a spider in its web, that the moment of his deliverance might not escape him, in case any should come his way over that line marked by the horizon. His shirt he had sacrificed in the making of a flag, which he attached to the top of a palm-tree from which he had torn the foliage. Taught by necessity, he found the means of keeping it spread out, by fastening twigs and wedges to the corners; for the fitful breeze might not be blowing at the moment when the passing traveler was looking over the desert.

Nevertheless there were long hours of gloom, when he had abandoned hope; then he played with his panther. He had come to understand the different inflexions of her voice, the expression of her eyes; he had studied the capricious patterns of the rosettes that marked her golden robe. Mignonne was not even angry when he took hold of the tuft at the end of her tail to count the black and white rings, those graceful ornaments which glistened in the sun like precious gems. It afforded him pleasure to contemplate the supple, lithe, soft lines of her lissome form, the whiteness of her belly, the graceful poise of her head. But it was especially when she was playing that he took the greatest pleasure in looking at her. The agility and youthful lightness of her movements were a continual wonder to him. He was amazed at the supple way in which she bounded, crept, and glided, or clung to the trunk of palm-trees, or rolled over, crouching sometimes to the ground and gathering herself together for her mighty spring; how she washed herself and combed down her fur. He noted that however vigorous her spring might be, however slippery the block of granite upon which she landed, she would stop, motionless, at the one word "Mignonne."

One day, under a bright midday sun, a great bird hovered in the sky. The Provençal left his panther to gaze at this new guest; but after pausing for a moment the deserted sultana uttered a deep growl.

"God take me! I do believe that she is jealous," he cried, seeing the rigid look appearing again in the metallic eyes. "The soul of Virginie has passed into her body, that's sure!"

The eagle disappeared in the ether, and the soldier admired the panther again, recalled by her evident displeas-

ure, her rounded flanks, and the perfect grace of her attitude. She was as pretty as a woman. There were youth and grace in her form. The blond fur of her robe shaded, with delicate gradations, to the dead-white tones of her furry thighs; the vivid sunshine brought out in its fullness the brilliancy of this living gold and its variegated brown spots with indescribable luster.

The Provençal and the panther looked at each other with a look pregnant with meaning. She trembled with delight (the coquettish creature) when she felt her friend scratch the strong bones of her skull with his nails. Her eyes glittered like lightning-flashes—then she closed them tightly.

"She has a soul!" cried he, looking at the stillness of this queen of the sands, golden like them, white as their waving light, solitary and burning as themselves.

"Well," said she, "I have read your defense of the beasts, but now tell me the end of this friendship between two beings who seemed to understand each other so thoroughly."

"Ah! there you are!" I replied. "It finished as all great passions end—by a misunderstanding. I believe that both sides imagine treachery; pride prevents an explanation, the rupture comes to pass through obstinacy."

"And sometimes on pleasant occasions," said she, "a glance, a word, an exclamation is all-sufficient. Well, tell me the end of the story."

"That is horribly difficult. But you will understand it the better if I give it you in the words of the old veteran, as he finished the bottle of champagne and exclaimed:

" 'I don't know how I could have hurt her, but she suddenly turned on me in a fury, seizing my thigh with her sharp teeth, and yet (I thought of this afterward) not cruelly. I imagined that she intended devouring me, and I plunged my poniard in her throat. She rolled over with a cry that rent my soul; she looked at me in her death-struggle, but without anger. I would have given the whole world—my cross, which I had not yet gained, all, everything—to restore her life to her. It was as if I had assassinated a real human being, a friend. When the soldiers who had seen my flag came to my rescue they found me in tears. Ah! well, monsieur,' he resumed, after a momentary pause, eloquent by its silence, 'I went through the wars in Germany, Spain, Russia, and France; I have marched my carcass well-nigh the world over, but I have seen nothing comparable to the desert. Ah! it is most beautiful! glorious!'

" 'What were your feelings there?' I asked.

" 'They cannot be told, young man. Besides, I do not always regret my panther, my bouquet of palms. I must, indeed, be sad for that. In the desert, see you, there is all, and there is nothing.'

" 'But wait!—explain that!'

" 'Well, then,' he replied, with an impatient gesture, 'God is there, man is not.' "

Sire de Maletroit's Door

Denis de Beaulieu was not yet two-and-twenty, but he counted himself a grown man, and a very accomplished cavalier into the bargain. Lads were early formed in that rough, warfaring epoch; and when one has been in a pitched battle and a dozen raids, has killed one's man in an honourable fashion, and knows a thing or two of strategy and mankind, a certain swagger in the gait is surely to be pardoned. He had put up his horse with due care, and supped with due deliberation; and then, in a very agreeable frame of mind, went out to pay a visit in the grey of the evening. It was not a very wise proceeding on the young man's part. He would have done better to remain beside the fire or go decently to bed. For the town was full of the troops of Burgundy and England under a mixed command; and though Denis was there on safe-conduct, his safe-conduct was like to serve him little on a chance encounter.

It was September, 1429; the weather had fallen sharp; a flighty piping wind, laden with showers, beat about the township; and the dead leaves ran riot along the streets. Here and there a window was already lighted up; and the noise of men-at-arms making merry over supper within, came forth in fits and was swallowed up and carried away by the wind. The night fell swiftly; the flag of England, fluttering on the spire-top, grew ever fainter and fainter against the flying clouds—a black speck like a swallow in the tumultuous, leaden chaos of the sky. As the night fell the wind rose, and began to hoot under archways and roar amid the tree-tops in the valley below the town.

Denis de Beaulieu walked fast and was soon knocking at his friend's door; but though he promised himself to stay only a little while and make an early return, his welcome was so pleasant, and he found so much to delay him, that it was already long past midnight before he said good-bye upon the threshold. The wind had fallen again in the meanwhile; the night was as black as the grave; not a star, nor a glimmer of moonshine, slipped through the canopy of cloud. Denis was ill-acquainted with the intricate lanes of Chateau Landon; even by daylight he had found some trouble in picking his way; and in this absolute darkness he soon lost it altogether. He was certain of one thing only—to keep mounting the hill; for his friend's house lay at the lower end, or tail, of Chateau Landon, while the inn was up at the head, under the great church spire. With this clue to go upon he stumbled and groped forward, now breathing more freely in open places where there was a good slice of sky overhead, now feeling along the wall in stifling closes. It is an eerie and mysterious position to be thus submerged in opaque blackness in an almost unknown town. The silence is terrifying in its possibilities. The touch of cold window bars to the exploring hand startles the man like the touch of a toad; the inequalities of the pavement shake his heart into his mouth; a piece of denser darkness threatens an ambuscade or a chasm in the pathway; and where the air is brighter, the houses put

on strange and bewildering appearances, as if to lead him farther from his way. For Denis, who had to regain his inn without attracting notice, there was real danger as well as mere discomfort in the walk; and he went warily and boldly at once, and at every corner paused to make an observation.

He had been for some time threading a lane so narrow that he could touch a wall with either hand, when it began to open out and go sharply downward. Plainly this lay no longer in the direction of his inn; but the hope of a little more light tempted him forward to reconnoitre. The lane ended in a terrace with a bartizan wall, which gave an outlook between high houses, as out of an embrasure, into the valley lying dark and formless several hundred feet below. Denis looked down, and could discern a few tree-tops waving and a single speck of brightness where the river ran across a weir. The weather was clearing up, and the sky had lightened, so as to show the outline of the heavier clouds and the dark margin of the hills. By the uncertain glimmer, the house on his left hand should be a place of some pretensions; it was surmounted by several pinnacles and turret-tops; the round stern of a chapel, with a fringe of flying buttresses, projected boldly from the main block; and the door was sheltered under a deep porch carved with figures and overhung by two long gargoyles. The windows of the chapel gleamed through their intricate tracery with a light as of many tapers, and threw out the buttresses and the peaked roof in a more intense blackness against the sky. It was plainly the hotel of some great family of the neighbourhood; and as it reminded Denis of a town house of his own at Bourges, he stood for some time gazing up at it and mentally gauging the skill of the architects and the consideration of the two families.

There seemed to be no issue to the terrace but the lane by which he had reached it; he could only retrace his steps, but he had gained some notion of his whereabouts, and hoped by this means to hit the main thoroughfare and speedily regain the inn. He was reckoning without that chapter of accidents which was to make this night memorable above all others in his career; for he had not gone back above a hundred yards before he saw a light coming to meet him, and heard loud voices speaking together in the echoing narrows of the lane. It was a party of men-at-arms going the night round with torches. Denis assured himself that they had all been making free with the wine-bowl, and were in no mood to be particular about safe-conducts or the niceties of chivalrous war. It was as like as not that they would kill him like a dog and leave him where he fell. The situation was inspiriting but nervous. Their own torches would conceal him from sight, he reflected; and he hoped that they would drown the noise of his footsteps with their own empty voices. If he were but fleet and silent, he might evade their notice altogether.

Unfortunately, as he turned to beat a retreat, his foot rolled upon a pebble; he fell against the wall with an ejaculation, and his sword rang loudly on the stones. Two or three voices demanded who went there—some in French, some in English; but Denis made no reply, and ran faster down the lane. Once upon the terrace, he

paused to look back. They still kept calling after him, and just then began to double the pace in pursuit, with a considerable clank of armour, and great tossing of the torchlight to and fro in the narrow jaws of the passage.

Denis cast a look around and darted into the porch. There he might escape observation, or—if that were too much to expect—was in a capital posture whether for parley or defense. So thinking, he drew his sword and tried to set his back against the door. To his surprise, it yielded behind his weight; and though he turned in a moment, continued to swing back on oiled and noiseless hinges, until it stood wide open on a black interior. When things fall out opportunely for the person concerned, he is not apt to be critical about the how or why, his own immediate personal convenience seeming a sufficient reason for the strangest oddities and revolutions in our sublunary things; and so Denis, without a moment's hesitation, stepped within and partly closed the door behind him to conceal his place of refuge. Nothing was further from his thoughts than to close it altogether; but for some inexplicable reason—perhaps by a spring or a weight—the ponderous mass of oak whipped itself out of his fingers and clanked to, with a formidable rumble and a noise like the falling of an automatic bar.

The round, at that very moment, debouched upon the terrace and proceeded to summon him with shouts and curses. He heard them ferreting in the dark corners; the stock of a lance even rattled along the outer surface of the door behind which he stood; but these gentlemen were in too high a humour to be long delayed, and soon made on down a corkscrew pathway which had escaped Denis' observation, and passed out of sight and hearing along the battlements of the town.

Denis breathed again. He gave them a few minutes' grace for fear of accidents, and then groped about for some means of opening the door and slipping forth again. The inner surface was quite smooth, not a handle, not a moulding, not a projection of any sort. He got his finger-nails round the edges and pulled, but the mass was immovable. He shook it, it was as firm as a rock. Denis de Beaulieu frowned and gave vent to a little noiseless whistle. What ailed the door? he wondered. Why was it open? How came it to shut so easily and so effectually after him? There was something obscure and underhand about all this, that was little to the young man's fancy. It looked like a snare; and yet who could suppose a snare in such a quiet by-street and in a house of so prosperous and even noble an exterior? And yet—snare or no snare, intentionally or unintentionally—here he was, prettily trapped; and for the life of him he could see no way out of it again. The darkness began to weigh upon him. He gave ear; all was silent without, but within and close by he seemed to catch a faint sighing, a faint sobbing rustle, a little stealthy creak—as though many persons were at his side, holding themselves quite still, and governing even their respiration with the extreme of slyness. The idea went to his vitals with a shock, and he faced about suddenly as if to defend his life. Then, for the first time, he became aware of a light about the level of his eyes and at some distance in the interior of the

house—a vertical thread of light, widening towards the bottom, such as might escape between two wings of arras over a doorway. To see anything was a relief to Denis; it was like a piece of solid ground to a man labouring in a morass; his mind seized upon it with avidity; and he stood staring at it and trying to piece together some logical conception of his surroundings. Plainly there was a flight of steps ascending from his own level to that of the illuminated doorway; and indeed he thought he could make out another thread of light, as fine as a needle and as faint as phosphorescence, which might very well be reflected along the polished wood of a handrail. Since he had begun to suspect that he was not alone, his heart had continued to beat with smothering violence, and an intolerable desire for action of any sort had possessed itself of his spirit. He was in deadly peril, he believed. What could be more natural than to mount the staircase, lift the curtain, and confront his difficulty at once? At least he would be dealing with something tangible; at least he would be no longer in the dark. He stepped slowly forward with outstretched hands, until his foot struck the bottom step; then he rapidly scaled the stairs, stood for a moment to compose his expression, lifted the arras and went in.

He found himself in a large apartment of polished stone. There were three doors; one on each of three sides; all similarly curtained with tapestry. The fourth side was occupied by two large windows and a great stone chimney-piece, carved with the arms of the Malétroits. Denis recognized the bearings, and was gratified to find himself in such good hands. The room was strongly illuminated; but it contained little furniture except a heavy table and a chair or two, the hearth was innocent of fire, and the pavement was but sparsely strewn with rushes clearly many days old.

On a high chair beside the chimney, and directly facing Denis as he entered, sat a little old gentleman in a fur tippet. He sat with his legs crossed and his hands folded, and a cup of spiced wine stood by his elbow on a bracket on the wall. His countenance had a strongly masculine cast; not properly human, but such as we see in the bull, the goat, or the domestic boar, something equivocal and wheedling, something greedy, brutal, and dangerous. The upper lip was inordinately full, as though swollen by a blow or a toothache; and the smile, the peaked eyebrows, and the small, strong eyes were quaintly and almost comically evil in expression. Beautiful white hair hung straight all round his head, like a saint's, and fell in a single curl upon the tippet. His beard and moustache were the pink of venerable sweetness. Age, probably in consequence of inordinate precautions, had left no mark upon his hands; and the Malétroit hand was famous. It would be difficult to imagine anything at once so fleshy and so delicate in design; the taper, sensual fingers were like those of one of Leonardo's women; the fork of the thumb made a dimpled protuberance when closed; the nails were perfectly shaped, and of a dead, surprising whiteness. It rendered his aspect tenfold more redoubtable, that a man with hands like these should keep them devoutly folded in his lap like a virgin

martyr—that a man with so intense and startling an expression of face should sit patiently on his seat and contemplate people with an unwinking stare, like a god, or a god's statue. His quiescence seemed ironical and treacherous, it fitted so poorly with his looks.

Such was Alain, Sire de Malétroit.

Denis and he looked silently at each other for a second or two.

"Pray step in," said the Sire de Malétroit. "I have been expecting you all the evening."

He had not risen, but he accompanied his words with a smile and a slight but courteous inclination of the head. Partly from the smile, partly from the strange musical murmur with which the Sire prefaced his observation, Denis felt a strong shudder of disgust go through his marrow. And what with disgust and honest confusion of mind, he could scarcely get words together in reply.

"I fear," he said, "that this is a double accident. I am not the person you suppose me. It seems you were looking for a visit; but for my part, nothing was further from my thoughts —nothing could be more contrary to my wishes—than this intrusion."

"Well, well," replied the old gentleman indulgently, "here you are, which is the main point. Seat yourself, my friend, and put yourself entirely at your ease. We shall arrange our little affairs presently."

Denis perceived that the matter was still complicated with some misconception, and he hastened to continue his explanation.

"Your door . . ." he began.

"About my door?" asked the other, raising his peaked eyebrows. "A little piece of ingenuity." And he shrugged his shoulders. "A hospitable fancy! By your own account, you were not desirous of making my acquaintance. We old people look for such reluctance now and then; and when it touches our honours, we cast about until we find some way of overcoming it. You arrive uninvited, but believe me, very welcome."

"You persist in error, sir," said Denis. "There can be no question between you and me. I am a stranger in this countryside. My name is Denis, damoiseau de Beaulieu. If you see me in your house, it is only—"

"My found friend," interrupted the other, "you will permit me to have my own ideas on that subject. They probably differ from yours at the present moment," he added with a leer, "but time will show which of us is in the right."

Denis was convinced he had to do with a lunatic. He seated himself with a shrug, content to wait the upshot; and a pause ensued, during which he thought he could distinguish a hurried gabbling as of prayer from behind the arras immediately opposite him. Sometimes there seemed to be but one person engaged, sometimes two; and the vehemence of the voice, low as it was, seemed to indicate either great haste or an agony of spirit. It occurred to him that this piece of tapestry covered the entrance to the chapel he had noticed from without.

The old gentleman meanwhile surveyed Denis from head to foot with a smile, and from time to time emitted little noises like a bird or a mouse, which seemed to indicate a high degree of satisfaction. This state of matters became rapidly insupportable; and

Denis, to put an end to it, remarked politely that the wind had gone down.

The old gentleman fell into a fit of silent laughter, so prolonged and violent that he became quite red in the face. Denis got upon his feet at once, and put on his hat with a flourish.

"Sir," he said, "if you are in your wits, you have affronted me grossly. If you are out of them, I flatter myself I can find better employment for my brains than to talk with lunatics. My conscience is clear; you have made a fool of me from the first moment; you have refused to hear my explanations; and now there is no power under God will make me stay here any longer; and if I cannot make my way out in a more decent fashion, I will hack your door in pieces with my sword."

The Sire de Malétroit raised his right hand and wagged it at Denis with the fore and little fingers extended.

"My dear nephew," he said, "sit down."

"Nephew!" retorted Denis, "you lie in your throat"; and he snapped his fingers in his face.

"Sit down, you rogue!" cried the old gentleman, in a sudden, harsh voice, like the barking of a dog. "Do you fancy," he went on, "that when I had made my little contrivance for the door I had stopped short with that? If you prefer to be bound hand and foot till your bones ache, rise and try to go away. If you choose to remain a free young buck, agreeably conversing with an old gentleman—why, sit where you are in peace, and God be with you."

"Do you mean I am a prisoner?" demanded Denis.

"I state the facts," replied the other. "I would rather leave the conclusion to yourself."

Denis sat down again. Externally he managed to keep pretty calm; but within, he was now boiling with anger, now chilled with apprehension. He no longer felt convinced that he was dealing with a madman. And if the old gentleman was sane, what, in God's name, had he to look for? What absurd or tragical adventure had befallen him? What countenance was he to assume?

While he was thus unpleasantly reflecting, the arras that overhung the chapel door was raised, and a tall priest in his robes came forth and, giving a long, keen stare at Denis, said something in an undertone to Sire de Malétroit.

"She is in a better frame of spirit?" asked the latter.

"She is more resigned, messire," replied the priest.

"Now the Lord help her, she is hard to please!" sneered the old gentleman. "A likely stripling—not ill-born—and of her own choosing, too? Why, what more would the jade have?"

"The situation is not usual for a young damsel," said the other, "and somewhat trying to her blushes."

"She should have thought of that before she began the dance. It was none of my choosing, God knows that: but since she is in it, by our Lady, she shall carry it to the end." And then addressing Denis, "Monsieur de Beaulieu," he asked, "may I present you to my niece? she has been waiting your arrival, I may say, with even greater impatience than myself."

Denis had resigned himself with a good grace—all he desired was to know

the worst of it as speedily as possible; so he rose at once, and bowed in acquiescence. The Sire de Malétroit followed his example and limped, with the assistance of the chaplain's arm, towards the chapel door. The priest pulled aside the arras, and all three entered. The building had considerable architectural pretensions. A light groining sprang from six stout columns, and hung down in two rich pendants from the centre of the vault. The place terminated behind the altar in a round end, embossed and honeycombed with a superfluity of ornament in relief, and pierced by many little windows shaped like stars, trefoils, or wheels. These windows were imperfectly glazed, so that the night air circulated freely in the chapel. The tapers, of which there must have been half a hundred burning on the altar, were unmercifully blown about; and the light went through many different phases of brilliancy and semi-eclipse. On the steps in front of the altar knelt a young girl richly attired as a bride. A chill settled over Denis as he observed her costume; he fought with desperate energy against the conclusion that was being thrust upon his mind; it could not—it should not—be as he feared.

"Blanche," said the Sire, in his most flute-like tones, "I have brought a friend to see you, my little girl; turn round and give him your pretty hand. It is good to be devout; but it is necessary to be polite, my niece."

The girl rose to her feet and turned towards the new comer. She moved all of a piece; and shame and exhaustion were expressed in every line of her fresh young body; and she held her head down and kept her eyes upon the pavement, as she came slowly forward. In the course of her advance, her eyes fell upon Denis de Beaulieu's feet—feet of which he was justly vain, be it remarked, and wore in the most elegant accoutrement even while traveling. She paused—started, as if his yellow boots had conveyed some shocking meaning—and glanced suddenly up into the wearer's countenance. Their eyes met; shame gave place to horror and terror in her looks; the blood left her lips; with a piercing scream she covered her face with her hands and sank upon the chapel floor.

"That is not the man!" she cried. "My uncle, that is not the man!"

The Sire de Malétroit chirped agreeably. "Of course not," he said; "I expected as much. It was so unfortunate you could not remember his name."

"Indeed," she cried, "indeed, I have never seen this person till this moment—I have never so much as set eyes upon him—I never wish to see him again. Sir," she said, turning to Denis, "if you are a gentleman, you will bear me out. Have I ever seen you—have you ever seen me—before this accursed hour?"

"To speak for myself, I have never had that pleasure," answered the young man. "This is the first time, messire, that I have met with your engaging niece."

The old gentleman shrugged his shoulders.

"I am distressed to hear it," he said. "But it is never too late to begin. I had little more acquaintance with my own late lady ere I married her; which proves," he added with a grimace, "that these impromptu marriages may often produce an excellent understanding in

the long-run. As the bridegroom is to have a voice in the matter, I will give him two hours to make up for lost time before we proceed with the ceremony." And he turned towards the door, followed by the clergyman.

The girl was on her feet in a moment. "My uncle, you cannot be in earnest," she said. "I declare before God I will stab myself rather than be forced on that young man. The heart rises at it; God forbids such marriages; you dishonour your white hair. Oh, my uncle, pity me! There is not a woman in all the world but would prefer death to such a nuptial. Is it possible," she added, faltering—"is it possible that you do not believe me—that you still think this"—and she pointed at Denis with a tremor of anger and contempt—"that you still think *this* to be the man?"

"Frankly," said the old gentleman, pausing on the threshold, "I do. But let me explain to you once for all, Blanche de Malétroit, my way of thinking about this affair. When you took it into your head to dishonour my family and the name that I have borne, in peace and war, for more than threescore years, you forfeited, not only the right to question my designs, but that of looking me in the face. If your father had been alive, he would have spat on you and turned you out of doors. His was the hand of iron. You may bless your God you have only to deal with the hand of velvet, mademoiselle. It was my duty to get you married without delay. Out of pure goodwill, I have tried to find your own gallant for you. And I believe I have succeeded. But before God and all the holy angels, Blanche de Malétroit, if I have not, I care not one jack-straw. So let me recommend you to be polite to our young friend; for upon my word, your next groom may be less appetising."

And with that he went out, with the chaplain at his heels; and the arras fell behind the pair.

The girl turned upon Denis with flashing eyes.

"And what, sir," she demanded, "may be the meaning of all this?"

"God knows," returned Denis gloomily. "I am a prisoner in this house, which seems full of mad people. More I know not; and nothing do I understand."

"And pray how came you here?" she asked.

He told her as briefly as he could. "For the rest," he added, "perhaps you will follow my example, and tell me the answer to all these riddles, and what, in God's name, is like to be the end of it."

She stood silent for a little, and he could see her lips tremble and her tearless eyes burn with a feverish lustre. Then she pressed her forehead in both hands.

"Alas, how my head aches!" she said wearily—"to say nothing of my poor heart! But it is due to you to know my story, unmaidenly as it must seem. I am called Blanche de Malétroit; I have been without father or mother for —oh! for as long as I can recollect, and indeed I have been most unhappy all my life. Three months ago a young captain began to stand near me every day in church. I could see that I pleased him; I am much to blame, but I was so glad that any one should love me; and when he passed me a letter, I

took it home with me and read it with great pleasure. Since that time he has written many. He was so anxious to speak with me, poor fellow! and kept asking me to leave the door open some evening that we might have two words upon the stair. For he knew how much my uncle trusted me." She gave something like a sob at that, and it was a moment before she could go on. "My uncle is a hard man, but he is very shrewd," she said at last. "He has performed many feats in war, and was a great person at court, and much trusted by Queen Isabeau in old days. How he came to suspect me I cannot tell; but it is hard to keep anything from his knowledge; and this morning, as we came from mass, he took my hand in his, forced it open, and read my little billet, walking by my side all the while. When he had finished, he gave it back to me with great politeness. It contained another request to have the door left open; and this has been the ruin of us all. My uncle kept me strictly in my room until evening, and then ordered me to dress myself as you see me—a hard mockery for a young girl, do you not think so? I suppose, when he could not prevail with me to tell him the young captain's name, he must have laid a trap for him: into which, alas! you have fallen in the anger of God. I looked for much confusion; for how could I tell whether he was willing to take me for his wife on these sharp terms? He might have been trifling with me from the first; or I might have made myself too cheap in his eyes. But truly I had not looked for such a shameful punishment as this. I could not think that God would let a girl be so disgraced before a young man. And now I have told you all; and I can scarcely hope that you will not despise me."

Denis made her a respectful inclination.

"Madam," he said, "you have honoured me by your confidence. It remains for me to prove that I am not unworthy of the honour. Is Messire de Malétroit at hand?"

"I believe he is writing in the salle without," she answered.

"May I lead you thither, madam?" asked Denis, offering his hand with his most courtly bearing.

She accepted it; and the pair passed out of the chapel, Blanche in a very drooping and shamefaced condition, but Denis strutting and ruffling in the consciousness of a mission, and the boyish certainty of accomplishing it with honour.

The Sire de Malétroit rose to meet them with an ironical obeisance.

"Sir," said Denis, with the grandest possible air, "I believe I am to have some say in the matter of this marriage; and let me tell you at once, I will be no party to forcing the inclination of this young lady. Had it been freely offered to me, I should have been proud to accept her hand, for I perceive she is as good as she is beautiful; but as things are, I have now the honour, messire, of refusing."

Blanche looked at him with gratitude in her eyes; but the old gentleman only smiled and smiled, until his smile grew positively sickening to Denis.

"I am afraid," he said, "Monsieur de Beaulieu, that you do not perfectly understand the choice I have to offer you. Follow me, I beseech you, to this window." And he led the way to one of

the large windows which stood open on the night. "You observe," he went on, "there is an iron ring in the upper masonry, and reeved through that, a very efficacious rope. Now, mark my words: if you should find your disinclination to my niece's person insurmountable, I shall have you hanged out of this window before sunrise. I shall only proceed to such an extremity with the greatest regret, you may believe me. For it is not at all your death that I desire, but my niece's establishment in life. At the same time, it must come to that if you prove obstinate. Your family, Monsieur de Beaulieu, is very well in its way; but if you sprang from Charlemagne, you should not refuse the hand of a Malétroit with impunity—not if she had been as common as the Paris road—not if she were as hideous as the gargoyle over my door. Neither my niece nor you, nor my own private feelings, move me at all in this matter. The honour of my house has been compromised; I believe you to be the guilty person; at least you are now in the secret; and you can hardly wonder if I request you to wipe out the stain. If you will not, your blood be on your own head! It will be no great satisfaction to me to have your interesting relics kicking their heels in the breeze below my windows; but half a loaf is better than no bread, and if I cannot cure the dishonour, I shall at least stop the scandal."

There was a pause.

"I believe there are other ways of settling such imbroglios among gentlemen," said Denis. "You wear a sword, and I hear you have used it with distinction."

The Sire de Malétroit made a signal to the chaplain, who crossed the room with long silent strides and raised the arras over the third of the three doors. It was only a moment before he let it fall again; but Denis had time to see a dusky passage full of armed men.

"When I was a little younger, I should have been delighted to honour you, Monsieur de Beaulieu," said Sire Alain; "but I am now too old. Faithful retainers are the sinews of age, and I must employ the strength I have. This is one of the hardest things to swallow as a man grows up in years; but with a little patience, even this becomes habitual. You and the lady seem to prefer the salle for what remains of your two hours; and as I have no desire to cross your preference, I shall resign it to your use with all the pleasure in the world. No haste!" he added, holding up his hand, as he saw a dangerous look come into Denis de Beaulieu's face. "If your mind revolts against hanging, it will be time enough two hours hence to throw yourself out of the window or upon the pikes of my retainers. Two hours of life are always two hours. A great many things may turn up in even as little a while as that. And besides, if I understand her appearance, my niece has still something to say to you. You will not disfigure your last hours by a want of politeness to a lady?"

Denis looked at Blanche, and she made him an imploring gesture.

It is likely that the old gentleman was hugely pleased at this symptom of an understanding; for he smiled on both, and added sweetly: "If you will give me your word of honour, Monsieur de Beaulieu, to await my return at the end of the two hours before attempting anything desperate, I shall withdraw

my retainers, and let you speak in greater privacy with mademoiselle."

Denis again glanced at the girl, who seemed to beseech him to agree.

"I give you my word of honour," he said.

Messire de Malétroit bowed, and proceeded to limp about the apartment, clearing his throat the while with that odd musical chirp which had already grown so irritating in the ears of Denis de Beaulieu. He first possessed himself of some papers which lay upon the table; then he went to the mouth of the passage and appeared to give an order to the men behind the arras; and lastly he hobbled out through the door by which Denis had come in, turning upon the threshold to address a last smiling bow to the young couple, and followed by the chaplain with a hand-lamp.

No sooner were they alone than Blanche advanced towards Denis with her hands extended. Her face was flushed and excited, and her eyes shone with tears.

"You shall not die!" she cried, "you shall marry me after all."

"You seem to think, madam," replied Denis, "that I stand much in fear of death."

"Oh, no, no," she said, "I see you are no poltroon. It is for my own sake—I could not bear to have you slain for such a scruple."

"I am afraid," returned Denis, "that you underrate the difficulty, madam. What you may be too generous to refuse, I may be too proud to accept. In a moment of noble feeling towards me, you forget what you perhaps owe to others."

He had the decency to keep his eyes upon the floor as he said this, and after he had finished, so as not to spy upon her confusion. She stood silent for a moment, then walked suddenly away, and falling on her uncle's chair, fairly burst out sobbing. Denis was in the acme of embarrassment. He looked round, as if to seek for inspiration, and seeing a stool, plumped down upon it for something to do. There he sat, playing with the guard of his rapier, and wishing himself dead a thousand times over, and buried in the nastiest kitchen-heap in France. His eyes wandered round the apartment but found nothing to arrest them. There were such wide spaces between the furniture, the light fell so badly and cheerlessly over all, the dark outside air looked in so coldly through the windows, that he thought he had never seen a church so vast, nor a tomb so melancholy. The regular sobs of Blanche de Malétroit measured out the time like the ticking of a clock. He read the device upon the shield over and over again, until his eyes became obscured; he stared into shadowy corners until he imagined they were swarming with horrible animals; and every now and again he awoke with a start, to remember that his last two hours were running and death was on the march.

Oftener and oftener, as the time went on, did his glance settle on the girl herself. Her face was bowed forward and covered with her hands, and she was shaken at intervals by the convulsive hiccup of grief. Even thus she was not an unpleasant object to dwell upon, so plump and yet so fine, with a warm brown skin, and the most beautiful hair, Denis thought, in the whole world of womankind. Her hands were like

her uncle's; but they were more in place at the end of her young arms, and looked infinitely soft and caressing. He remembered how her blue eyes had shone upon him, full of anger, pity, and innocence. And the more he dwelt on her perfections, the uglier death looked, and the more deeply was he smitten with penitence at her continued tears. Now he felt that no man could have the courage to leave a world which contained so beautiful a creature; and now he would have given forty minutes of his last hour to have unsaid his cruel speech.

Suddenly a hoarse and ragged peal of cockcrow rose to their ears from the dark valley below the windows. And this shattering noise in the silence all around was like a light in a dark place, and shook them both out of their reflections.

"Alas, can I do nothing to help you?" she said, looking up.

"Madam," replied Denis, with a fine irrelevancy, "if I have said anything to wound you, believe me, it was for your own sake and not for mine."

She thanked him with a tearful look.

"I feel your position cruelly," he went on. "The world has been bitter hard on you. Your uncle is a disgrace to mankind. Believe me, madam, there is no young gentleman in all France but would be glad of my opportunity, to die in doing you a momentary service."

"I know already that you can be very brave and generous," she answered. "What I *want* to know is whether I can serve you—now or afterwards," she added, with a quaver.

"Most certainly," he answered with a smile. "Let me sit beside you as if I were a friend, instead of a foolish intruder; try to forget how awkwardly we are placed to one another; make my last moments go pleasantly; and you will do me the chief service possible."

"You are very gallant," she added, with a yet deeper sadness . . . "very gallant . . . and it somehow pains me. But draw nearer, if you please, and if you find anything to say to me, you will at least make certain of a very friendly listener. Ah! Monsieur de Beaulieu, how can I look you in the face?" And she fell to weeping again with a renewed effusion.

"Madam," said Denis, taking her hand in both of his, "reflect on the little time I have before me, and the great bitterness into which I am cast by the sight of your distress. Spare me, in my last moments, the spectacle of what I cannot cure even with the sacrifice of my life."

"I am very selfish," answered Blanche. "I will be braver, Monsieur de Beaulieu, for your sake. But think if I can do you no kindness in the future—if you have no friends to whom I could carry your adieux. Charge me as heavily as you can; every burden will lighten, by so little, the invaluable gratitude I owe you. Put it in my power to do something more for you than weep."

"My mother is married again, and has a young family to care for. My brother Guichard will inherit my fiefs; and if I am not in error, that will content him amply for my death. Life is a little vapour that passeth away, as we are told by those in holy orders. When a man is in a fair way and sees all life open in front of him, he seems to himself to make a very important

figure in the world. His horse whinnies to him; the trumpets blow and the girls look out of windows as he rides into town before his company; he receives many assurances of trust and regard—sometimes by express in a letter—sometimes face to face, with persons of great consequence falling on his neck. It is not wonderful if his head is turned for a time. But once he is dead, were be as brave as Hercules or as wise as Solomon, he is soon forgotten. It is not ten years since my father fell, with many other knights around him, in a very fierce encounter, and I do not think that any one of them, nor so much as the name of the fight, is now remembered. No, no, madam, the nearer you come to it, you see that death is a dark and dusty corner, where a man gets into his tomb and has the door shut after him till the judgment day. I have few friends just now, and once I am dead I shall have none."

"Ah, Monsieur de Beaulieu!" she exclaimed, "you forget Blanche de Malétroit."

"You have a sweet nature, madam, and you are pleased to estimate a little service far beyond its worth."

"It is not that," she answered. "You mistake me if you think I am so easily touched by my own concerns. I say so, because you are the noblest man I have ever met; because I recognise in you a spirit that would have made even a common person famous in the land."

"And yet here I die in a mouse-trap —with no more noise about it than my own speaking," answered he.

A look of pain crossed her face, and she was silent for a little while. Then a light came into her eyes, and with a smile she spoke again.

"I cannot have my champion think meanly of himself. Any one who gives his life for another will be met in Paradise by all the heralds and angels of the Lord God. And you have no such cause to hang your head. For . . . Pray, do you think me beautiful?" she asked, with a deep flush.

"Indeed, madam, I do," he said.

"I am glad of that," she answered, heartily. "Do you think there are many men in France who have been asked in marriage by a beautiful maiden—with her own lips—and who have refused her to her face? I know you men would half despise such a triumph; but believe me, we women know more of what is precious in love. There is nothing that should set a person higher in his own esteem; and we women would prize nothing more dearly."

"You are very good," he said; "but you cannot make me forget that I was asked in pity and not for love."

"I am not so sure of that," she replied, holding down her head. "Hear me to an end, Monsieur de Beaulieu. I know how you must despise me; I feel you are right to do so; I am too poor a creature to occupy one thought of your mind, although, alas! you must die for me this morning. But when I asked you to marry me, indeed, and indeed, it was because I respected and admired you, and loved you with my whole soul, from the very moment that you took my part against my uncle. If you had seen yourself, and how noble you looked, you would pity rather than despise me. And now," she went on,

hurriedly checking him with her hand, "although I have laid aside all reserve and told you so much, remember that I know your sentiments towards me already. I would not, believe me, being nobly born, weary you with importunities into consent. I too have a pride of my own: and I declare before the holy mother of God, if you should now go back from your word already given, I would no more marry you than I would marry my uncle's groom."

Denis smiled a little bitterly.

"It is a small love," he said, "that shies at a little pride."

She made no answer, although she probably had her own thought.

"Come hither to the window," he said, with a sigh. "Here is the dawn."

And indeed the dawn was already beginning. The hollow of the sky was full of essential daylight, colourless and clean; and the valley underneath was flooded with a grey reflection. A few thin vapors clung in the coves of the forest or lay along the winding course of the river. The scene disengaged a surprising effect of stillness, which was hardly interrupted when the cocks began once more to crow among the steadings. Perhaps the same fellow who had made so horrid a clangour in the darkness not half an hour before, now sent up the merriest cheer to greet the coming day. A little wind went bustling and eddying among the tree-tops underneath the windows. And still the daylight kept flooding insensibly out of the east, which was soon to grow incandescent and cast up that red-hot cannon-ball, the rising sun.

Denis looked out over all this with a bit of a shiver. He had taken her hand and retained it in his almost unconsciously.

"Has the day begun already?" she said; and then, illogically enough: "the night has been so long! Alas! what shall we say to my uncle when he returns?"

"What you will," said Denis, and he pressed her fingers in his.

She was silent.

"Blanche," he said, with a swift, uncertain, passionate utterance, "you have seen whether I fear death. You must know well enough that I would as gladly leap out of the window into the empty air as to lay a finger on you without your free and full consent. But if you care for me at all do not let me lose my life in a misapprehension; for I love you better than the whole world; and though I will die for you blithely, it would be like all the joys of Paradise to live on and spend my life in your service."

As he stopped speaking, a bell began to ring loudly in the interior of the house, and a clatter of armour in the corridor showed that the retainers were returning to their post, and the two hours were at an end.

"After all that you have heard?" she whispered, leaning towards him with her lips and eyes.

"I have heard nothing," he replied.

"The captain's name was Florimond de Champdivers," she said in his ear.

"I did not hear it," he answered, taking her supple body in his arms and covering her wet face with kisses.

A melodious chirping was audible behind, followed by a beautiful chuckle, and the voice of Messire de Malétroit wished his new nephew a good morning.

Capture of the Guerrière

Our preparations for war aboard the *Constitution* were much hastened by the return of John Adams with despatches from our English and French ministers. We immediately sailed from Annapolis to join the squadron at New York, which consisted of the *President, United States,* and other men-of-war lying there. We spoke but few vessels on our passage. One day, about four P. M., a large sail hove in sight. We immediately gave chase, and gained on her handsomely. At eight o'clock in the evening, Captain Hull came forward on the forecastle. Some of the officers and crew clustered respectfully around him. Old Adams, the boatswain, was standing by:

"Adams," said Hull, "what do you think of that vessel?"

"Don't know, sir," replied the veteran tar, with his deep voice. "I can't make her out, sir. But I think she's an Englishman."

"So do I," added Hull. "How long will it take to flog her, Adams?"

"Don't know, sir!" replied the boatswain. "We can do it, but they're hard fellows on salt water."

"I know that," continued the captain; "they are rather a hard set of fellows, sure enough. But don't you think we can flog them in two hours and a half, Adams?"

"Yes, sir!" said the boatswain, with all the coolness imaginable. "Yes, sir! we can do it in that time, if we can do it at all."

The captain turned away with a smile, and almost instantly had all sail set, and the ship drawing toward the stranger, with a smacking breeze to jog her along.

Hull came forward again, and took a close survey of the ocean and the distant sail.

"Dog her by and large till morning," said he to the lieutenant, "and then we shall see what she's made of."

That night every man on board the *Constitution* was wide awake. There was no sneaking from duty in any part of the brave old ship. I laid in my quarters on the bare deck, by the side of my gun. The sponger and ram-rod were all the time lying by me, ready for use at a moment's notice. Two pistols belonging to a midshipman, Mr. German, were given into my charge for him. Other watches were in similar situations. It was a stirring hour. We hoped that we were about to strike the first blow for our country and her flag. There had never been a time, since our nation existed, when a fair trial of American naval prowess had occurred; our ships, our commanders, our men, during the war of the Revolution, had always fought to great disadvantage on the ocean; the honours won for us by the Chevalier Paul Jones were claimed as legitimately belonging to a British subject—a native of Scotland; our privateers, fitted out and manned in great haste, could not be expected to give fair specimens of American valour: here, then, on board the well-known and honoured frigate *Constitution,* was to be the theater for a naval action that should cover the Republic either with living disgrace or glory.

There was not an American sailor in that ship but felt something of this. However he might express it, in the rough words of the deep, or the bold look of his eye, this was the sentiment of his patriotic bosom.

At four o'clock in the morning, we heard the cry:—"Up, men! up! here's the whole American squadron within sight!"

"Pretty American squadron!" said I, as I looked out of the port-hole. "American squadron! Don't you see that English seventy-four?"

And sure enough, it proved to be a British fleet, blockading New York. Of course, it would not do for us single-handed to meddle with so many, and our course was plain.

All hands were called to quarters. New arrangements were made for escaping the enemy; port-holes were cut in the stern, on the spar-deck, and guns run out immediately. The English were now within three miles of us. There were seven men-of-war in all: the *Aeolus, African, Shannon, Guerrière, Belvidere, Nautilus,* and one other. It was a spirit-stirring sight, to see them steering towards us, with all sail set.

Our guns were now all up, and the breechings rove. Captain Hull came aft, coolly surveyed the scene, took a match in his hand, and ordered the quarter-master to hoist the American flag. I stood within a few feet of Hull at the time. He clapped the fire to my gun, No. 1, and such a barking as sounded over the sea! It was worth hearing. No sooner had our iron dog opened his mouth in this manner, than the whole enemy opened the whole of theirs. Every one of the ships fired directly toward us. Those nearest kept up their firing for some time; but of course not a shot reached us then, at the distance we were.

Captain Hull gave up the match to the captain of the gun, and we kept blazing away with our stern chasers. The shots we fired helped to send us ahead, out of the reach of the enemy. There was little or no wind; but we resolved to save ourselves from capture, or sink in the conflict. We soon found, however, that we made but slow work in getting ahead. Hull called Lieutenant Morris to him and said calmly,—

"Let's lay broadside to them, Mr. Morris, and fight the whole! If they sink us, we'll go down like men!"

We were off Little Egg Harbour, on the New Jersey shore, at the time stretching in toward the Delaware Bay. The enemy had drawn in between us and the land, so that the prospect was they might cut us off from the Capes.

Mr. Morris now spoke to Captain Hull: "There is one thing, sir, I think we'd better try."

"What's that?" replied Hull.

"Try to kedge her off," said the lieutenant.

"Well, try it," responded the captain.

"But I imagine you'll fail. The water's too deep here; we've at least forty fathoms."

The kedges were soon under way. Every man worked as an American always should. We gained a little on the enemy by this manœuvre. We brought all the spare rigging out of the boatswain's store-room, and bent on so much line to the kedges that before one short peak came out of the ground, we let go the other kedge; this kept the frigate surging ahead all the while, at the rate of about three knots an hour,

with the help of the boats. It was almost a dead calm, and the enemy soon saw that we were gaining on them. There was considerable stir on board the nearest ships. They had an American captain in one of them, who told us afterwards that he saw and understood our "Yankee trick." The British imitated us, but they couldn't do much. They set the boats from three ships to work towing the one nearest us; but she made very little headway; we gained on them constantly, although slowly.

At that time not an American vessel, of any kind, was in sight; we were pursued alone, by the shores of our native country, and a more resolute set of men never smelt salt water. There hung on the mast, drooping silently in the calm-sky, the ensign that we all loved so well; and as we looked toward it from the boats and tops, we were determined to a man that it should never go down but with the ship. Captain Hull saw and felt this patriotic feeling, and cherished it to the utmost. Our stern chasers were fired at the ship closest aboard us; but the shot went over her. They fired their bow guns in return; but nothing hit us. We were anxious to cut away their rigging or masts, and bring down their sails by the run.

The boats were all manned. In one of them, Midshipman Bourie, as he looked toward the enemy, and thought of the possibility of an engagement, exclaimed, "O, that I had my pistols here, that I might defend my boat to the last." Such was the spirit that animated every bosom. Is it any wonder that such seamen, when self-possessed, are almost always victorious on the ocean?

Toward dark a breeze sprang up, which helped us along very well.

Next morning it had increased to a pretty fresh blow, and we cracked on all the sail we could carry. One of the enemy's ships kept middling close to us; but we were ready for her. She ran down toward us, and then bore away for a short time. Again she hauled her wind, and put on after us. But it was no use. We walked away from her as if she had been lying at anchor. We then had no land in sight, and the wind kept freshening every hour. A squall broke on us; but we were ready for it, and had in the studding-sails in less than no time. Everything was set again, below and aloft, as soon as the squall passed over; and we showed the enemy our heels in a way that will long be remembered. We beat the fastest ship they had so badly, that we chased her hull down in a few hours.

"Now," said the captain, as the last strip of sail disappeared on the horizon, "now we'll take a cruise by ourselves; but if I come across one of these chaps alone, depend on it he shall pay for this."

We turned our cruise toward Boston, meeting with merchant vessels occasionally. One of them—bound to New York—we saved by giving notice of the blockade there. The captain presented us with a puncheon of rum for our information; and we presented him our wishes for his safe arrival in return. Rum was then more thought of on board our men-of-war than is now considered profitable.

In a few days we arrived in Boston, where we met the news that we had been captured by the enemy! It was said we had not ammunition enough.

But if those who thought so had remained at our quarters until our ammunition was all gone, they would probably have altered their opinion. We had enough, at least, to tire them "some."

At Boston we obtained more men, wood and water; and were soon under way on another cruise. We met a number of merchant-men. Those of them that belonged to the enemy we set on fire, taking the crews with us as prisoners of war.

On the seventh day out from Boston, we met with some of the enemy. It was in the month of August, toward night. The ocean was soon shrouded in darkness. As the night came on, I think I never saw it darker.

At a late hour a vessel hove in sight, close aboard of us. We thought we saw a light in her cabin; but it proved to be a floating beacon which she had thrown overboard for the purpose of putting us on the wrong track. But we passed this dancing lantern in her wake, and steered directly for the ship. We kept her in view all night; and the next morning she proved to be the *Ranger,* a British sloop-of-war. It was not long before we were in her wake, and steering straight into her stern. On the way, we passed a large Dutch barque, that put new mettle into our speed. She had been taken under English colours by an American privateer, and retaken by the British, being then in charge of the *Ranger.* The American officers and men had not been taken out—so close were we upon them. The *Ranger* had concluded to let go this prize, and make good her own escape; but another large vessel, loaded with hemp and rosin, was set fire to before we could come up, and burnt to the water's edge.

We soon boarded and took possession of the barque. From her we learned that the *Ranger* had taken another prize, then on the way to Halifax. We ran down toward the *Ranger,* ordering the barque to follow but she refused to do it. We immediately left her to her fate, and stretched away to leeward for the other prize. It took but little time to overhaul her. Captain Hull was on the deck at the time.

"Load the long Tom," said he, "and give them some."

No answer.

"Closer!" cried Hull. "Fire closer!"

The next shot did the work. Her colours came down, and she rounded to. It was well she did, for a few more shots such as the last would have made it all day with her.

We took possession in the name of the Stars and Stripes, and soon had the prisoners all out of her, and on board the frigate. She was then manned to send in. Midshipman Madison was put on board as prize-master, with orders to take her to the nearest American port. But she was afterwards taken by the *Acasta* frigate, carried to England, and the captured thrown into that horrible place, Dartmoor Prison.

We continued our cruise, taking an occasional vessel from the enemy, and setting her on fire. Many a fine large ship was thus destroyed by the *Constitution.* But we always saved the crews, and living animals. I do not remember that a goat, dog, fowl, or cat was thus burnt up.

At eleven o'clock on the night of the 18th of August, 1812, a brig hove in sight. It was very foggy, and we were

unable to make out what she was. As we came up, Captain Hull hailed her himself:

"What brig's that?"

"The *John,* of St. John's."

"Where are you bound?"

"Halifax."

"Come under our lee. We'll send a boat aboard."

Lieutenant Morris boarded her. A boy of theirs, whom we had brought over from France, was heard to cry out:

"The old *Constitution!*"

"Away with your nonsense, lad," said one of the men in reply.

"You'll find out it is," added the boy. "Don't you see the eagle buttons?"

Lieutenant Morris had now reached the deck of the *John.* Her captain had ordered his state-room shut, and thrown his guns and cutlasses overboard, supposing us to be enemies. But the room was soon opened again, and our men had what they pleased. This vessel laid by us all night, and proved to be a Baltimore privateer. She had been chased all day by the *Guerrière;* and was afraid of us, on account of the fog.

The weather had now cleared up; and as we had learned by this adventure something of the whereabouts of the *Guerrière,* we were anxious to be off for her. But our Baltimore-Halifax neighbour had sprung his main-topmast in trying to get away from us,—we supplied him with a new one, and a quantity of muskets, cutlasses, and ruffles for the enemy's wrists.

Having learned which way the *Guerrière* was steering when last seen, we crowded all sail in that direction. We steered a northeast course for several hours, until the morning of the 19th of August, 1812. This was the day of the battle.

We now changed our course, and steered south-east, with a good breeze. At ten o'clock, A. M., the lookout cried:

"Sail ho!"

"Where away?" inquired the lieutenant in command.

"Two points off the larboard bow, sir!" was the reply.

Hull had now come on deck. His first order was to a midshipman:

"Mr. German! take the glass and go aloft. See if you can make out what she is."

German was soon above us, looking intently in the direction named.

"What do you think?" asked Hull, with animation.

"She's a great vessel, sir! Tremendous sails."

"Never mind," coolly added Hull. "You can come down, sir. Mr. Adams," addressing another officer, "call all hands. Make sail for her!"

But before all hands could be called, there was a general rush on deck. The word had passed like lightning from man to man; and all who could be spared came flocking up like pigeons from a net bed. From the spar deck to the gun deck, from that to the berth deck, every man was roused and on his feet. All eyes were turned in the direction of the strange sail, and quick as thought studding-sails were out, fore and aft. The noble frigate fairly bounded over the billows, as we gave her a rap full, and spread her broad and tall wings to the gale.

The stranger hauled his wind, and laid to for us. It was evident that he was an English man-of-war, of a large

class, and all ready for action. In one of her topsails we read these words:

"NOT THE LITTLE BELT"

We understood this to mean that the ship we were now approaching was not the *Little Belt* which had been previously attacked. But we knew that very well; and subsequent events proved that they might have saved themselves the trouble of telling us of it. We saw it was the vessel we wanted to meet, not the *Little Belt,* but the big *Guerrière,* of thirty-nine guns.

As we came up she began to fire. They were evidently trying to rake us. But we continued on our course, tacking and halftacking, taking good care to avoid being raked. We came so near on one tack, that an eighteen-pound shot came through us under the larboard knight-head, striking just abaft the breech of the gun to which I belonged. The splinters flew in all directions; but no one was hurt. We immediately picked up the shot, and put it in the mouth of long Tom, a large gun loose on deck—and sent it home again, with our respects.

Another stray shot hit our foremast, cutting one of the hoops in two. But the mast was not otherwise injured, and the slight damage was soon repaired.

Hull was now all animation. He saw that the decisive moment had come. With great energy, yet calmness of manner, he passed around among the officers and men, addressing to them words of confidence and encouragement.

"Men!" said he, "now do your duty. Your officers cannot have entire command over you now. Each man must do all in his power for his country."

At this moment a man was killed on our spar deck. He had run away from us, and was only returned about a fortnight. He fell by the side of long Tom, and never rose again.

Hull now determined on closing with the enemy.

"Why don't you fire?" said he.

"We can't get our guns to bear, as she now lies," was the answer.

"Never mind, my boys!" said he to the men. "You shall have her as close as you please. Sailing-master! lay her alongside!"

We came up into the wind in gallant style. As we fell off a little the *Guerrière* ranged by us her whole length.

The stars and stripes never floated more proudly than they did at that moment. All was silent beneath them, save the occasional order from an officer, or the low sound of the movement of our implements of war. Every man stood firm at his post.

"No firing at random!" cried Hull in a subdued tone of voice. "Let every man look well to his aim."

This was the pride of American seamen. Correctness in taking aim did more than anything else in securing the naval victories of the last war.

A shot from the enemy now struck the spar deck, and word was passed that a man was killed.

The long Tom had been capsized, and Ike Kingman got a hoist. But jumping up, with a slap of the hand he said to himself, "take that."

"Now close with them!" cried Hull, raising his voice to its sternest note of command, so that it could be heard on the enemy's decks.

"Alongside with her, sailing-master!"

A whole broadside from our guns fol-

lowed this command. The *Constitution* shook from stem to stern. Every spar and yard in her was on a tremble. But no one was hurt by the recoil of the guns, though several were made deaf by the noise. We instantly followed the thunder of our cannon with three loud cheers, which rang along the ship like the roar of waters, and floated away rapidly to the ears of the enemy.

This was a Yankee style which the British had not adopted. The English officers often spoke of it to ours, after the war was over. They said they were astonished at the spirit of our men in the toil and heat of the battle. Amid the dying and the dead, the crash of timbers, the flying of splinters and falling of spars, the American heart poured out its patriotism with long and loud cheers. The effect was always electrical, throughout all the struggle for our rights.

When the smoke cleared away after the first broadside, we saw that we had cut off the mizzen mast of the *Guerrière*, and that her main-yard had been shot from the slings. Her mast and rigging were hanging in great confusion over her sides, and dashing against her on the waves.

This discovery was followed by cheers from the *Constitution*, and the cry:

"Huzza, boys! We've made a brig of her! Next time we'll make her a sloop!"

On board the *Guerrière* was an American, by the name of Ben Hodges. As the battle commenced he appealed to the captain:

"That is an American frigate," said he; "and I cannot fight against my country."

How different this from the course of many an Englishman during the war! It was a feeling which the commander of the *Guerrière* respected.

"Go below, my man," said he. "Go into the cockpit. You may be of assistance there."

Hodges obeyed the order. As he stood by one of the surgeons, a voice said:

"I don't see that we've much to do, after all."

"Hold on a bit, sir," responded Hodges. "The Yankees haven't begun it. I'm thinking, sir, you'll have plenty to do."

This was just as the action was commencing. In a moment a red glare followed.

"There!" cried Ben. "They've begun. Now, look out." He had hardly spoken before fifteen or twenty wounded men were tumbled into the cockpit.

"Your words were true enough, Ben," said one of the surgeons as he took up a knife. "Here's work for us—and plenty of it, too."

The *Guerrière* returned our fire with spirit—but it passed too high, and spent its force among our light spars, rigging and sails. Our fore-royal truck was shot away, with two pair of halyards; the flag was hanging down tangled on the shivered mast in the presence of the enemy. This sight inspired one of our men, familiarly called Dan Hogan, to the daring feat of nailing the standard to the mast. He was a little Irish chap, but brim-full of courage. Without a word from anyone, he sprang into the rigging and was aloft in a moment. He was soon seen, under the fire of the enemy, who saw him, too, at the topmast height, clinging on with one hand, and with the other making all fast, so

that the flag could never come down unless the mast came with it. The smoke curled around him as he bent to the work; but those who could see him, kept cheering him through the sulphury clouds. He was soon down again, and at his station in the fight.

Several shot now entered our hull. One of the largest the enemy could command struck us, but the plank was so hard it fell out and sank in the waters. This was afterwards noticed, and the cry arose:

"Huzza! Her sides are made of iron! See where the shot fell out!"

From that circumstance the name of the *Constitution* was garnished with the familiar title:

"OLD IRONSIDES"

By this title she is known around the world.

Very soon after the battle commenced, Lieutenant Bush fell, mortally wounded. Lieutenant Morris received a wound in his chest; but he bore himself bravely through until we won the day. Lieutenant Wardsworth came nobly forward, and filled the place made vacant by death with great honour to himself and advantage to the ship.

The braces of both ships were now shot off. The *Guerrière* swung round into our mizzen rigging, so that a part of her laid right over our taffrail. One might see the whites of the eyes, and count the teeth of the enemy. Our stern guns were pouring in upon them, so that we raked the ship fore and aft. Every shot told well. In a few moments the foremast was gone, and our prediction was fulfilled. The great *Guerrière* had become a sloop. Soon after the mainmast followed, rendering her a complete wreck. In the fall of the masts some of our boats were swept off, but the *Constitution* herself was hardly touched, except in some of the yards and sails. Both ships kept firing constantly—our guns continuing to do the most fearful execution.

One of the lieutenants now asked the captain if he should call the boarders.

"No!" replied Hull. "No! We can take her without losing so many lives."

The enemy seemed to have been expecting us to board him. He had placed two cannonades on the bowsprit, in such a manner as to sweep off our men as they should attempt to board. These were loaded to the muzzle with musket balls in canvas bags, and would have cut us down like a flock of sheep.

We were preparing for an attack in another quarter, when the *Guerrière* suddenly dropped to the leeward, and fired a gun for assistance. They tried to haul their colours down; but every man who could be seen attempting it, was shot dead from the tops of the *Constitution.* We were determined to give them an opportunity to be convinced that we would defend our country's rights to the last; and, besides, we thought these repeated attempts to haul down the flag were intended to deceive us—for we saw the men as busy as ever in continuing the action. I heard the powder-boy nearest me on board the *Guerrière* call to another:

"Work away, there! Huzza! She'll soon be ours!"

The women they had with them were engaged in passing powder, and other munitions of war. Amid such activity on the decks of the enemy, courage and prudence demanded that we should be active on our own.

As an intended insult, the English had hoisted a puncheon of molasses on their main stay, and sent out word:

"Do give the Yankees some switchel. They will need it, when they are our prisoners."

But we made a very different use of this molasses from what they intended. Our shooting at hogsheads in the Chesapeake Bay, was now turned to good account. We soon tapped their sweet stuff for them, in a way which they little thought of. The Yankee shot tasted the English molasses, and not the Yankee lips. We made the decks of the *Guerrière* so slippery, that her men could hardly stand! They had more switchel prepared for them than they knew what to do with.

The action was now nearly at its close. The firing had become less frequent on both sides. All felt the necessity of proceeding at once to repair damages. But we dared not trust the enemy. Notwithstanding his disabled condition, it was evident he would attack us again, the first opportunity. His men were still numerous—his ammunition was but partly spent, and his guns had been cleared away from the lower decks, so as to work to the best advantage.

We sent a boat on board, but could get no satisfaction. His colours were down—but still there was danger of his attacking us unawares. This inspired a determined spirit on board the *Constitution.*

"Let's sink them!" was the cry that ran along our decks—for we felt that we were deceived.

At this moment Captain Dacres appeared in one of our boats, and immediately surrendered himself as a prisoner of war. We did not have any switchel prepared for him as he came on board, because we thought he had had enough already. The delivery of his sword to Hull by Dacres was a scene never to be forgotten by those who witnessed it.

As he placed the hilt in the hand of Hull, his first remark was:

"Captain Hull! what have you got for men?"

"O," replied Hull, with a sly smile, "only a parcel of green bush-whackers, Captain Dacres!"

"Bush-whackers! They are more like tigers than men. I never saw men fight so. They fairly drove us from our quarters."

We remained by the *Guerrière* all night. The prisoners were taken out and humanely disposed of. We immediately set ourselves at work, repairing damages. Two anchor stocks welded on the foremast, that had been injured by the stray shot, made that as good as new. In one hour's time, we had the gallant frigate as trim as she was when the fight began. But it was not so with the *Guerrière.* The Yankee wounds made in her sides were incurable. She was kept afloat near us, but with six feet of water in her hold. Lieutenant Reed had command. The prisoners were set at the pumps, but they could not all keep her free. She was soon reported to be in a sinking condition, and we hastened to get all the men out of her.

Some of the captives came on board of us very badly wounded. Their sufferings were greater than can be described, or even imagined. One poor fellow had his under jaw shot off; and while we were watching him, he bled to death. Others, deprived of arms and

legs, lingered in the greatest torture, until death put an end to their pains.

There was one of our men—Dick Dunn—who bore the amputation of his leg with a fortitude I shall always bear in mind. "You are a hard set of butchers," was all he said to the surgeon, as his torn and bleeding limb was severed from his body. Others, whom I could name, bore their amputations equally well. Some of these brave defenders of the nation are among my friends; and I sometimes meet them stumping it through life. In the midst of all this suffering, Captain Hull was frequently found tendering the consolations needed in such an hour, and showing his humanity to the best advantage. He even looked more truly noble, bending over the hammock of a wounded tar, than when invading and conquering the enemy.

In spite of all the efforts to keep her afloat, we now saw that the *Guerrière* was rapidly sinking. A council of war was held on board the *Constitution,* and the decision was that she should be blown up. It was a moment of the deepest interest. After removing every thing thought necessary to be saved, we put a slow match to the magazine, and left her.

There was something melancholy and grand in the sight. Although the frigate was a wreck, floating about a mastless hulk at the sport of the waves, she bore marks of her former greatness. Much of her ornamental work had been untouched; and her long, high, black sides rose in solitary majesty before us, as we bade her farewell. For years she had been the house of thousands of human beings; for years she had withstood the shocks of the winds, the billows and the battle; for years she had borne the insignia of English valour to different and distant climes. But her years were now ended; her course was run; she was about to sink into the deep ocean forever.

Captain Dacres stood by our taffrail as we squared away from the *Guerrière.* He seemed to brush away a tear from his dark eye, as he took the last look of the vessel he had so lately commanded. But whatever may have been his feelings, it must be admitted that he had done his own duty well—and his men had defended their vessel to the last.

At the distance of about three miles we hove to, and awaited the result. Hundreds of eyes were stretched in that one direction, where the ill-fated *Guerrière* moved heavily on the deep. It was like waiting for the uncapping of a volcano—or the bursting up of a crater. Scarcely a word was spoken on board the *Constitution,* so breathless was the interest felt in the scene.

The first intimation we had that the fire was at work was the discharge of the guns. One after another, as the flame advanced, they came booming toward us. Roar followed roar, flash followed flash, until the whole mass was enveloped in clouds of smoke. We could see but little of the direct progress of the work, and therefore we looked more earnestly for the explosion —not knowing how soon it might occur. Presently there was a dead silence; then followed a vibratory, shuddering motion, and streams of light, like streaks of lightning running along the sides; and the grand crash came! The quarter deck, which was immediately over the magazine, lifted in a mass, broke into

fragments, and flew in every direction. The hull, parted in the center by the shock, and loaded with such masses of iron and spars, reeled, staggered, plunged forward a few feet, and sank out of sight.

It was a grand and awful scene. Nearly every floating thing around her went down with the *Guerrière*. Scarcely a vestige remained to tell the world that such a frigate had ever swept the seas. We immediately squared away, and were again under a crowd of sail for our native land.

Thus ended the capture of the *Guerrière*.

Quest of the Golden Fleece

A SCORE of years ago there was a man in North Borneo, whose name does not matter—a man who had the itch of travel in him, and loved untrodden places for their own sake. He undertook to explore the interior of the no-man's-land which the Chartered Company euphemistically described as its "property." He made his way inland from the western coast, and little more was heard of him for several months. At the end of that time a haze of disquieting rumours, as impalpable as the used-up, fever-laden wind that blows eternally from the interior, reached the little squalid stations on the seashore; and shortly afterward the body of the explorer, terribly mangled and mutilated, was sluiced down-country by a freshet, and brought up on a sand-spit near the mouth of a river on the east coast. Here it was discovered by a couple of white men, who with the aid of a handful of unwilling natives buried it in becoming state, since it was the only thing with a European father and mother which had ever travelled across the centre of North Borneo, from sea to sea, since the beginning of time.

In life the explorer had been noted for his beard, a great yellow cascade of hair which fell down his breast from his lip to his waist; and when his corpse was found this ornament was missing. The Chartered Company, whose business it was to pay dividends in adverse circumstances, did not profess to be a philanthropical institution, and could not spend its hard-squeezed revenues upon putting the fear of death into people who have made too free with the lives of white folk, as is the practice in other parts of Asia. Therefore no steps were taken by the local administration to punish the Muruts of the interior who had amused themselves by putting the explorer to an ugly death; but the knowledge that the murdered man's beard had been shorn from his chin by some truculent savage, and was even then ornamenting the knife-handle of a Murut chief in the heart of the island rankled in the minds of the white men on the spot. The wise and prudent members of the community talked a great deal, said roundly that the thing was a shame and an abomination, and took care to let their discretion carry them no farther than the spoken word. The young and foolish did not say much, but the recovery of that wisp of hair became to many of them a tremendous

ambition, a dream, something that made even existence in North Borneo tolerable, while it presented itself to their imaginations as a feat possible of accomplishment. With a few this dream became an *idée fixe*, an object in a life that otherwise was unendurable; and it may even have saved a few from the perpetration of more immediate follies. The quest would be the most hazardous conceivable, a fitting enterprise for men rendered desperate by the circumstances into the midst of which fate had thrust them.

Sitting at home in England, with pleasant things to distract the mind all about you, and with nothing at hand more dangerous than a taxicab, all this bother concerning the hairs off a dead man's chin may appeal to you as something absurdly sentimental and irrational; but try for the moment to place yourself in the position of an isolated white man at an outstation of North Borneo. Picture to yourself a tumble-down thatched bungalow standing on a roughly cleared hill, with four Chinese shops and a dilapidated police-station squatting on the bank of a black, creeping river. Rub in a smudge of blue-green forest, shutting you up on flanks, front, and rear. Fill that forest with scattered huts, wherein squalid natives live the lives of beasts—natives whose language you do not know, whose ideas you do not understand, who make their presence felt only by means of savage howls raised by them in their drunken orgies—natives whose hatred of you can only be kept from active expression by such fear as your armed readiness may inspire. Add to this merciless heat, faint exhausted air, an occasional bout of the black fever of the country, and not enough of work to preserve your mind from rust. Remember that the men who are doomed to live in these places get no sport, have no recreations, no companionship; and that the long, empty, suffocating days trail by, one by one, bringing no hope of change, and that the only communication with the outer world is kept up fitfully by certain dingy steam-tramps which are always behind time, and which may, or may not, arrive once a month. Can you wonder that amid such surroundings men wax melancholy; that they take to brooding over all manner of trivial things in a fashion which is not quite sane; and that the knowledge that their continued existence is dependent upon the wholesome awe in which white folks are held sometimes gets upon their nerves, and makes them feverishly anxious to vindicate the honour of their race? When you have let the full meaning of these things sink into your minds, you will begin to understand why so much excitement prevailed in North Borneo concerning the reported ownership of the deceased explorer's beard.

Timothy O'Hara and Harold Bateman had lived lives such as those which I have described for half a dozen years or more. They had had ample leisure in which to turn the matter of the explorer's beard over and over in their minds, till the thought of it had bred something like fanaticism—a kind of still, white-hot rage within them. It chanced that their leave of absence fell due upon one and the same day. It followed that they put their heads together and decided to start upon a private raid of their own into the interior of the Murut country, with a view to redeeming the trophy. It also

followed that they made their preparations with the utmost secrecy, and that they enlisted a dozen villainous little Dyaks from Sarawak to act as their punitive force. The whole thing was highly improper and very illegal, but it promised adventurous experiences, and both Bateman and O'Hara were young and not overwise. Also, it must be urged in extenuation of their conduct that they had the effects of some six years' crushing monotony to work off; and that they had learned to regard the Muruts of the interior as their natural enemies; and that the ugliness and the deadly solitude of their existence had rendered them savage, just as the tamest beast becomes wild and ferocious when it finds itself held in the painful grip of a trap.

I am in nowise concerned to justify their doings: my part is to record them. O'Hara and Bateman vanished one day from the last outpost of quasi-civilisation, having given out that they were off up-country in search of big game—which was a fact. Their little expedition slipped into the forest, and the wilderness swallowed it up. When once they had pushed out into the unknown interior they were gone past power of recall, were lost as completely as a needle in a ten-acre hay-field; and they breathed more freely because they had escaped from the narrow zone wherein the law of the white man runs, and need guide themselves for the future merely by the dictates of their own rudimentary notions of right and wrong.

They had a very hard time of it, so far as I can gather; for the current of the rivers, which crept toward them, black and oily, from the upper country, was dead against them, and the rapids soon caused them to abandon their boats. Then they tramped it, trudging with dogged perseverance up and down the hills, clambering painfully up sheer ascents, slipping down the steep pitches on the other side, splashing and labouring through the swamps betwixt hill and hill, or wading waist-deep across wildernesses of rank *lalang*-grass, from the green surface of which the refracted heat smote them under their hat-brims with the force of blows. Aching in every limb, half-blinded by the sweat that trickled into their eyes, flayed by the sun, mired to the ears in the morasses, torn by thorn-thickets, devoured by tree-leeches, stung by all manner of jungle-insects, and oppressed by the weight of self-imposed effort that pride forbade them to abandon, they struggled forward persistently, fiercely, growing more savage and more vindictive at every painful step. The golden fleece of beard, which was the object of their quest, became an oriflamme, in the wake of which they floundered eternally through the inferno of an endless fight. Their determination to recover it became a madness, a possession: it filled their minds to the exclusion of aught else, nerved them to fresh endeavour, spurred them out of their weariness, and would not suffer them to rest. But the bitterness of their travail incensed them mightily against the Murut folk, whose lack of reverence for white men had imposed so tremendous a task upon these self-appointed champions of their race; and as they sat over their unpalatable meals when the day's toil was ended, they talked together in bloodthirsty fashion of the vengeances they would wreak and the punishment they would exact from the tribe which was

discovered to be in possession of the object of their search.

One feature of their march was that prudence forbade a halt. The Murut of North Borneo is a person of mean understanding, who requires time wherein to set his slow intellect in motion. He is a dipsomaniac, a homicide by training and predilection, and he has a passion for collecting other people's skulls, which is as unscrupulous and as fanatical as that of the modern philatelist. Whenever he encounters a stranger, he immediately falls to coveting that stranger's skull; but as he is a creature of poor courage it is essential to his comfort that he should win possession of it only by means that will not endanger his own skin. The question as to how such means may be contrived presents a difficult problem for his solution, and it takes his groping mind from two to three days in which to hit upon a workable plan. The explorer, as Bateman and O'Hara were aware, had lost his life because, overcome by fatigue, he had allowed himself to commit the mistake of spending more than a single night under a hospitable Murut roof-tree, and had so given time to his hosts to plot his destruction. Had he only held steadily upon his way, all might have been well with him: for in a country where every village is at enmity with its neighbours, a short march would have carried him into a stranger's land, which he should have been able to quit in its turn ere the schemes for his immolation hatched therein had had time in which to ripen. O'Hara and Bateman, therefore, no matter how worn out they might be by that everlasting, clambering tramp across that cruel huddle of hill-caps, were rowelled by necessity into pushing forward, and still forward, as surely as the day dawned.

Often the filth and squalor of the long airless huts—each one of which accommodated a whole village community in its dark interior, all the pigs and fowls of the place beneath its flooring, and as many blackened human skulls as could find hanging space along its roof-beams—sickened them, and drove them forth to camp in the jungle. Here there were only wild beasts—self-respecting and on the whole cleanly beasts, which compared very favourably with the less attractive animals in the village huts—but a vigilant guard had to be maintained against possible surprise; and this, after a heart-breaking tramp, was hard alike upon white men and Dyaks.

The raiders had pitched their camp in such a place one evening; and as the party lacked meat, and the pigeons could be heard cooing in the tree-tops close at hand, O'Hara took his fowling piece and strolled off alone into the forest, with the intention of shooting a few birds for the pot. The jungle was very dense in this part of the country—so dense, indeed, that a man was powerless to see in any direction for a distance of more than a dozen yards; but the pigeons were plentiful, and as they fluttered from tree to tree O'Hara walked after them without in the least realising how far he was straying from his starting point. At last the fast-failing light arrested his attention, and as he stooped to pick up the last pigeon, the search for which among the brambles had occupied more time than he had fancied, it suddenly struck him that he ought to be returning to the camp, while a doubt as

to its exact direction assailed him. He was in the very act of straightening himself again with a view to looking about him for some indication of the path by which he had come when a slight crackle in the underwood smote upon his ear. He remained very still, stooping forward as he was, holding his breath, and listening intently. It flashed through his mind that the sound might have been made by one of the Dyaks, who perhaps had come out of the camp in search of him and he waited the repetition of the snapping noise with eagerness, hoping that it would tell him whether it were caused by man or beast. As he stood thus for an instant with bowed shoulders, the crackle came again, louder, crisper, and much clearer than before; and at the same moment, before he had time to change his attitude or to realise that danger threatened him, something smote him heavily in the back, bringing him prone to the earth with a grunt. The concussion was caused by some yielding substance, that was yet quick and warm; and the litter of dead leaves and the tangle of underwood combined to break his fall. He was not hurt, therefore, though the breath was knocked out of him, and that unseen something, which tumbled and writhed upon his back, pinned him to the ground. He skewed his head round, trying to see what had assailed him, and immediately a diabolical face peeped over his shoulder an inch or two above it. He only saw, as it were, in a flash; but the sight was one which, he was accustomed to say, he would never forget. In after years it was wont to recur to him in dreams, and as surely as it came it woke him with a scream. It was a savage face, brown yet pallid, grimed with dirt and wood ashes, with a narrow retreating forehead, a bestial prognathous snout, and a tiny twitching chin. The little black eyes, fierce and excited, were ringed about with angry sores, for the eyelashes had been plucked out. The eyebrows had been removed, but from the upper lip a few coarse wires sprouted uncleanly. The face was split in twain by a set of uneven teeth pointed like those of a wild cat, and tightly clenched, while above and below them the gums snarled rigidly, bearing witness to the physical effort which their owner was making. The scalp was divided into even halves by a broad parting, on either side of which there rose a tangle of dirty, ill-kept hair, that was drawn back into a chignon, giving to the creature a curious sexless aspect. All these things O'Hara noted in the fraction of a second; and as the horror bred of them set him heaving and fighting as well as his cramped position made possible, a sharp knee-cap was driven into the back of his neck, and his head fell with a concussion that blinded him. For a moment he lay still and inert, and in that moment he was conscious of little deft hands, that flew this way and that, over, under, and around his limbs, and of the pressure of narrow withes, drawn suddenly taut, that ate into his flesh. Up to this time the whole affair has been transacted in a dead, unnatural silence that somehow gave to it the strangeness and unreality of a nightmare; but now, as O'Hara lay prostrate with his face buried in the underwood, the even song of the forest insects, which rings through the jungle during the gloaming hour, was suddenly interrupted by an outbreak of queer sounds —by gurgling, jerky speech intermixed

with shrill squeakings and whistlings, and by the clicking cackle which stands the Murut folk instead of laughter. Yet even now the voices of his captors were subdued and hushed, as though unwilling to be overheard; and O'Hara, understanding that the Muruts feared to be interrupted by their victim's friends, made shift to raise a shout, albeit the green stuff forced its way into his mouth and choked his utterance.

Immediately the little nimble hands were busy, clutching him afresh, while the tones of those inhuman voices shrilled and gurgled and clicked more excitedly than before. O'Hara was heaved and tugged, first one way, then another, until his body was rolled over on to its back, falling with a dull bump. He shouted once more, putting all the strength that was in him into the yell, and the nearest Murut promptly stamped on his mouth with his horny heel. O'Hara bit viciously at the thing, but his teeth could make no impression upon its leathery under-surface, and before he could shout again he found himself gagged with a piece of wood, which was bound in its place by a couple of withes. Despair seized him then, and for a moment or two he lay still, with the manhood knocked fairly out of him by a crushing consciousness of impotence, while the gabble of squeak and whistle and grunt, still hushed cautiously, broke out more discordantly than ever.

The withes about his limbs bound O'Hara so cripplingly that only his neck was free to move; but presently, craning it upward, he caught sight of his persecutors for the first time. They formed a squalid group of little, half-starved, wizened creatures, not much larger than most European children of fourteen, but with brutal faces that seemed to bear the weight of whole centuries of care and animal indulgence. They were naked, save for their foul loin-clouts; they were abominably dirty, and their skins were smothered in leprous-looking ringworm; they had not an eyelash or an eyebrow among them, for the hairs had been plucked out by the root; but their scalps were covered by frowsy growths, gathered into loathsome chignons on the napes of their necks. Every man was armed with one or more spears, and from the waist of each a long knife depended, sheathed in a wooden scabbard hung with tufts of hair. One of them—the man of whose face O'Hara had caught a glimpse above his shoulder—flourished his sheathed knife insistently in his captive's face with grotesque gesticulations, and O'Hara shuddered every time that the disgusting tassels that bedecked the scabbard swept his cheek. The fading daylight was very dim now, enabling O'Hara to see only the *form* of the things by which he was surrounded; *colour* had ceased to have any meaning in those gloomy forest aisles. The grinning savage prancing and gibbering around him, and brandishing that sheathed weapon with its revolting trophies, puzzled him. If he meant murder, why did he not draw his blade? In the depth of his misery the inconsequence of this war-dance furnished O'Hara with an additional torture.

Presently two of the Muruts came suddenly within his field of vision bearing a long green pole. This they proceeded to thrust between O'Hara's flesh and the withes that were entwined about him; and when this had been accom-

plished, the whole party set their shoulders under the extremities of the pole and lifted their prisoner clear of the ground. Then they bore him off at a sort of jog-trot.

The thongs, tightened fearfully by the pressure thus put upon them, pinched and bruised him pitilessly; and his head, lacking all support, hung down in an attitude of dislocation, waggling this way and that at every jolt; the blood surged into his brain, causing a horrible vertigo, and seeming to thrust his eyes almost out of their sockets; he thought that he could *feel* his limbs swelling above the biting grip of the withes, and an irresistible nausea seized him. Maddening cramps tied knots in his every muscle; and had his journey been of long duration, Timothy O'Hara would never have reached its end alive. Very soon, however, the decreased pace, and the shrill whistling sounds which came from the noses of his Murut bearers, told him that the party was ascending a hill—for these strange folk do not pant like ordinary human beings, and the uncanny noise was familiar to O'Hara from many a toilsome march in the company of native porters. Presently, too, between the straining legs of the leading files, O'Hara caught a flying glimpse of distant fire; and that, he knew, betokened the neighbourhood of a village.

A few minutes later, just as he thought that he was about to lose consciousness, the village was reached—a long, narrow hut, raised on piles, and with a door at either end, from the thresholds of which crazy ladder-ways led to the ground. Up the nearest of these rude staircases the Muruts struggled with their burden, banging his head roughly against each untrimmed rung, and throwing him down on the bamboo flooring with a chorus of grunts. For a moment there was silence, while the entire community gathered round the white man, staring at him eagerly with a kind of ferocious curiosity. Then with one accord all the men, women and children present set up a diabolical chorus of whoopings and yellings. They seemed to give themselves over to a veritable insanity of noise. Some, squatting on their heels, supporting the weight of their bodies on arms thrust well behind them, tilted their chins to the roof and howled like maniacs. Others, standing erect, opened their mouths to their fullest extent, and emitted a series of shrill blood-curdling bellows. Others, again, shut their eyes, threw their arms aloft, and, concentrating every available atom of energy in the effort, screamed till their voices broke. The ear-piercing din sounded as though all the devils in hell had of a sudden broken loose. Heard from afar, the savage triumph, the diabolical delight that found in it their fitting expression, might well have made the blood run cold in the veins of the bravest; but heard close at hand by the solitary white man whose capture had evoked that hideous outcry, and who knew himself to be utterly at the mercy of these fiends, it was almost enough to unship his reason. O'Hara told me that from that moment he forgot the pains which his bonds had occasioned him, forgot even his desire to escape, and was filled with a tremendous longing to be put out of his agony—to be set free by death from this unspeakable inferno. His mind, he said, was working with surprising activity, and "as though it

belonged to somebody else." In a series of flashes he began to recall all that he had ever heard of the manners and customs of the Muruts, of the strange uses to which they put their prisoners; and all the while he was possessed by a kind of restlessness that made him eager for them to do *something*—of no matter how awful a character—that would put a period to his unendurable suspense.

Meanwhile the Muruts were enjoying themselves thoroughly. Great earthenware jars, each sufficiently large to drown a baby with comfort, were already standing round the enclosed veranda which formed the common-room of the village, on to which each family cubicle opened, and to these jars the Muruts—men, women, and children—repeatedly addressed themselves, squatting by them, and sucking up the abominable liquor which filled them through long bamboo tubes. Each toper, as he quitted the jar, fell to howling with redoubled energy; and as more and more of the fiery stuff was consumed, their cries became more savage, more inarticulate, and more diabolical.

Half a dozen men, however, were apparently busy in the performance of some task on a spot just behind O'Hara's head, for though they frequently paid visits of ceremony to the liquor-jars, they always staggered back to the same part of the room when their draughts were ended, and there fell to hacking and hammering at wood with renewed energy. O'Hara was convinced that they were employed in constructing some infernal instrument of torture; and the impossibility of ascertaining its nature was maddening, and set his imagination picturing every abominable contrivance for the infliction of anguish of which he had ever heard or read. And all the while the hideous orgies, for which his capture was the pretext, were waxing fast and furious.

Suddenly the hidden group behind him set up a shrill cat-call, and at the sound every Murut in sight leaped to his or her feet, and danced frantically with hideous outcry and maniacal laughter. A moment later a rattan rope whined as it was pulled over the main beam of the roof with something heavy at its end; and as the slack of the cord was made fast to the wall-post opposite to him, O'Hara was aware of some large object suspended in mid-air, swinging out into the middle of the veranda immediately above him. This, as he craned his neck up at it, struggling to see it more clearly in the uncertain torch-light, was presently revealed as a big cage, an uneven square in shape, the bars of which were some six inches apart, saving on one side, where a wide gap was left. He had barely had time to make this discovery when a mob of Murut men and women rushed at him, cut the bonds that bound him, and mauling him mercilessly, lifted him up, and literally threw him into the opening formed by the gap. The cage rocked crazily, while the Muruts yelled their delight, and two of their number proceeded hastily to patch up the gap with cross-pieces of wood. Then the whole crowd drew away a little, though the hubbub never slackened, and O'Hara set his teeth to smother the groans which the pains of the removed bonds nearly wrung from him. For the time fear was forgotten in the acuteness of the agony which he endured; for as the blood began to flow freely once more, every inch of his body seemed to have

been transformed into so many raging teeth. His extremities felt soft and flabby—cold, too, like jellies—but O'Hara was by nature a very strong man and at the time of his capture had been in the pink of condition. In an incredibly short while, therefore, the pain subsided, and he began to regain the use of his cramped limbs.

He was first made aware of his recovered activity by the alacrity with which he bounded into the centre of the cage in obedience to a sharp prick in the back. He tried to rise to his feet, and his head came into stunning contact with the roof; then, in a crouching attitude, he turned in the direction whence the attack had reached him. What he saw filled him with horror. The leader of the Muruts who had captured him, his eyes bloodshot with drink, was staggering about in front of him with grotesque posturings, waving his knife in one hand and its wooden sheath in the other. It was the former, evidently, that had administered that painful prod to O'Hara's back, but it was the latter which chained the white man's attention even in that moment of whirling emotions, for from its base depended a long shaggy wisp of sodden yellow hair—the golden fleece of which O'Hara and Bateman were in search. In a flash the savage saw that his victim had recognised the trophy to which he had already been at some pains to direct to his attention, and the assembled Muruts gave unmistakable tokens that they all grasped the picturesqueness of the situation. They yelled and howled and bayed more frantically than ever; some of them rolled upon the floor, their limbs and faces contorted by paroxysms of savage merriment, while others staggered about, smiting their fellows on their bare shoulders, squeaking like bats, and clicking like demoralised clockwork. A second prod with a sharp point made O'Hara shy across his narrow cage like a fly-bitten horse, and before he could recover his balance a score of delicately handled weapons inflicted light wounds all over his face and hands. As each knife touched him its owner put up his head and repeated some formula in a shrill sing-song, no word of which was intelligible to O'Hara save only the name of Kina-Balu—the great mountain which dominates North Borneo, and is believed by the natives to be the eternal resting-place of the spirits which have quitted the life of earth.

Then, for the first time, O'Hara understood what was happening to him. He had often heard of the ceremony known to the wild Muruts as a *bangun*, which has for its object the maintenance of communication between the living and the dead. He had even seen a pig hung up, as he was now hanging, while the tamer Muruts prodded it to death very carefully and slowly, charging it the while with messages for the spirits of the departed; and he remembered how the abominable cruelty of the proceeding had turned him sick, and had set him longing to interfere with native religious customs in defiance of the prudent government which he served. Now he was himself to be done to death by inches, just as the pig had died, and he knew that men had spoken truly when they had explained to him that the unfortunate quadruped was only substituted for a nobler victim as a concession to European prejudice, to the great discontent of the tame Muruts.

These thoughts rushed through his

mind with the speed of lightning, and all the while it seemed to him that every particle of his mental forces was concentrated upon a single object—the task of defending himself against a crowd of persecutors. Crouching in the centre of the cage, snarling like a cat, with his eyes bursting from their sockets, his every limb braced for a leap in any direction, his hands scrabbling at the air to ward off the stabs, he faced from side to side, his breath coming in quick, noisy pants. Every second one or another of the points that assailed him made him turn about with a cry of rage, and immediately his exposed back was prodded by every Murut within reach. Suddenly he heard his own voice raised in awful curses and blasphemies, and the familiar tones of his mother-tongue smote him with surprise. He had little consciousness of pain as pain, only the necessity of warding off the points of his enemies' weapons presented itself to him as something that must be accomplished at all costs, and each separate failure enraged him. He bounded about his cage with an energy and an agility that astonished him, and the rocking of his prison seemed to keep time with the lilting of his thumping heart-beats. More than once he fell, and his face and scalp were prodded terribly ere he could regain his feet; often he warded off a thrust with his bare hands. But of the wounds which he thus received he was hardly conscious; his mind was in a species of delirium of rage, and all the time he was torn with a fury of indignation because he, a white man, was being treated in this dishonouring fashion by a pack of despicable Muruts. But he received no serious injury; for the Muruts, who had many messages for their dead relations, were anxious to keep the life in him as long as might be, and in spite of their intoxication, prodded him with shrewdness and caution. How long it all lasted O'Hara never knew with certainty; but it was the exhaustion caused by loss of breath and blood, and by the wild leaping of that bursting heart of his, that caused him presently to sink on the floor of his cage in a swoon.

The Muruts, finding that he did not answer to their stabs, drew off and gathered eagerly around the liquor-jars. The killing would come soon after dawn —as soon, in fact, as their overnight orgies made it possible—when the prisoner would be set to run the gauntlet, and would be hacked to pieces after one final delicious *bangun*. It was essential, therefore, that enough strength should be left in him to show good sport; and in the meantime their villainous home-made spirits would bring that measure of happiness which comes to the Murut from being suffered, for a little space, to forget the fact of his own repulsive existence. Accordingly, with noisy hospitality, each man tried to make his neighbour drink to greater excess than himself, and all proved willing victims. With hoots and squeals of laughter, little children were torn from their mothers' breasts and given to suck at the bamboo pipes, their ensuing intoxication being watched with huge merriment by men and women alike. The shouts raised by the revellers became more and more shaky, less and less articulate; over and over again the groups around the jars broke up, while their members crawled away, to lie about in deathlike stupors, from which

they aroused themselves only to vomit and drink anew.

Long after this stage of the proceedings had been reached, O'Hara had recovered his senses; but prudence bade him lie as still as a mouse. Once or twice a drunken Murut lurched onto his feet and made a pass or two at him, and now and again he was prodded painfully; but putting forth all the self-control at his command, he gave no sign of life. At last every Murut in the place was sunken in abominable torpor, excepting only the chief, from whose knife-scabbard hung the tuft of hair which had once ornamented the chin of the explorer. His little red eyes were fixed in a drunken stare upon O'Hara, and the latter watched them with a fascination of dread through his half-closed lids. Over and over again the Murut crawled to the nearest liquor-jar, and sucked up the dregs with a horrible sibilant gurgling; and at times he even staggered to his feet, muttering and mumbling over his tiny, busy chin, waving his weapon uncertainly, ere he subsided in a limp heap upon the floor. On each occasion he gave more evident signs of drowsiness and at last his blinking eyes were covered by their lashless lids.

At the same moment a gentle gnawing sound, which had been attracting O'Hara's attention for some minutes, though he had not dared to move by so much as a finger's breadth to discover its cause, ceased abruptly. Then the faintest ghost of a whisper came to his ears from below his cage, and, moving with the greatest caution, and peering down through the uncertain light, he saw that a hole had been made by sawing away two of the laths which formed the flooring. In the black hole immediately beneath him the faces of two of his own Dyaks were framed, and even as he looked one of them hoisted himself into the hut, and began deftly to remove the bars of the cage, working as noiselessly as a shadow. The whole thing was done so silently, and O'Hara's own mind was so racked by the emotions which his recent experiences had held for him, that he was at first persuaded that what he saw, or rather fancied he saw, was merely a figment conjured up for his torture by the delirium which possessed him. He felt that if he suffered himself to believe in this mocking delusion even for an instant, the disappointment of discovering its utter unreality would drive him mad. He was already spent with misery, physical and mental; he was constantly holding himself in leash to prevent the commission of some insane extravagance; he was seized with an unreasoning desire to scream. He fought with himself—a self that was unfamiliar to him, although its identity was never in doubt—as he might have fought with a stranger. He told himself that his senses were playing cruel pranks upon him, and that nothing should induce him to be deceived by them; and all the while—hope—mad, wild hysterical hope—was surging up in his heart, shaking him like an aspen, wringing unaccustomed tears from his eyes, and tearing his breast with noiseless sobs.

As he lay inert and utterly wretched, unable to bear up manfully under this new wanton torture of the mind, the ghost of the second Dyak clambered skilfully out of the darkness below the hut, and joined his fellow, who had already made a wide gap in the side of

the cage. Then the two of them seized O'Hara, and with the same strange absence of sound lifted him bodily through the prison and through the hole in the flooring on to the earth below. Their grip upon his lacerated flesh hurt him acutely; but the very pain was welcome, for did it not prove the reality of his deliverers? What he experienced of relief and gratitude O'Hara could never tell us, for all he remembers is that, gone suddenly weak and plaintive as a child, he clung to the little Dyaks, sobbing broken-heartedly, and weeping on their shoulders without restraint or decency, in utter *abandon* of self-pity. Also he recalls dimly that centuries later he found himself standing in Bateman's camp, with his people gathering about him, and that of a sudden he was aware that he was mother-naked. After that, so he avers, all is a blank.

The closing incidents of the story were related to me by Bateman one evening when I chanced to foregather with him in an up-country outpost in Borneo. We had been talking far into the night, and our *solitude à deux* and the lateness of the hour combined to thaw his usual taciturnity and to unlock his shy confidence. Therefore I was put in possession of a secret which until then, I believe, had been closely kept.

"It was an awful night," he said, "that upon which poor O'Hara was missing. The Dyaks had gone out in couples all over the place to try to pick up his trail, but I remained in the camp; for though there was a little moon, it was too dark for a white man's eyes to be of any good. What with the inactivity, and my fears for O'Hara, I was as 'jumpy' as you make 'em; and as the Dyaks began to drop in, two at a time, each couple bringing in their tale of failure, I worked myself up to such a state of depression and misery that I thought I must be going mad. Just about three o'clock in the morning the last brace of Dyaks turned up, and I was all of a shake when I saw that they had poor O'Hara with them. He broke loose from them and stumbled into the centre of the camp stark naked, and pecked almost to bits by those infernal Murut knives; but the wounds were not overdeep, and the blood was caking over most of them. He was an awful sight, and I was for tending his hurt without delay; but he pushed me roughly aside, and I saw that his eyes were blazing with madness. He stood there in the midst of us all, throwing his arms above his head, cursing in English and in the vernacular, and gesticulating wildly. The Dyaks edged away from him, and I could see that his condition funked them mortally. I tried again and again to speak to him and calm him, but he would not listen to a word I said, and for full five minutes he stood there raving and ranting, now and again pacing frenziedly from side to side, pouring out a torrent of invective mixed with muddled orders. One of the Dyaks brought him a pair of trousers, and after looking at them as though he had never seen such things before, he put them on, and stood for a second or two staring wildly around him. Then he made a bee-line for a rifle, loaded it, and slung a bandolier across his naked shoulders; and before I could stay him he was marching out of the camp with the whole crowd of Dyaks at his heels.

"I could only follow. I had no fancy

for being left alone in that wilderness, more especially just then, and one of the Dyaks told me that he was leading them back to the Murut village. You see I only speak Malay, and as O'Hara had been talking Dyak I had not been able to follow his ravings. Whatever lingo he jabbered, however, it was as plain as a pikestaff that the fellow was mad as a hatter; but I had to stop explaining this to him, for he threatened to shoot me, and the Dyaks would not listen. They clearly thought that he was possessed by a devil, and they would have gone to hell at his bidding while their fear of him was upon them.

"And his madness made him cunning too, for he stalked the Murut den wonderfully neatly, and just as the dawn was breaking we found ourselves posted in the jungle within a few yards of the two doors, which were the only means of entrance or exit for the poor devils in the hut.

"Then O'Hara leaped out of his hiding place and began yelling like the maniac he was; and in an instant the whole of that long hut was humming like a disturbed beehive. Three or four squalid creatures showed themselves at the doorway nearest O'Hara, and he greeted them with half the contents of his magazine, and shrieked with laughter as they toppled onto the ground rolling over in their death-agony. There was such a wailing and crying set up by the other inhabitants of the hut as you never heard in all your life—it was just despair made vocal—the sort of outcry that a huge menagerie of wild animals might make when they saw flames lapping at their cages; and above it all I could hear O'Hara's demoniac laughter ringing with savage delight, and the war-whoops of those little devils of Dyaks, whose blood was fairly up now. The trapped wretches in the hut made a stampede for the farther door; we could hear them scuffling and fighting with one another for the foremost places. They thought that safety lay in that direction; but the Dyaks were ready for them, and the bullets from their Winchesters drove clean through three and four of the squirming creatures at a time, and in a moment that doorway, too, and the ground about the ladder foot were a shambles.

"After that for a space there was a kind of awful lull within the hut, though without O'Hara and his Dyaks capered and yelled. Then the noise which our folk were making was drowned by a series of the most heart-breaking shrieks you ever heard or dreamed of, and immediately a second rush was made simultaneously at each door. The early morning light was getting stronger now, and I remember noting how incongruously peaceful and serene it seemed. Part of the hut near our end had caught fire somehow, and there was a lot of smoke, which hung low about the doorway. Through this I saw the crowd of Muruts struggle in that final rush, and my blood went cold when I understood what they were doing. Every man had a woman or a child held tightly in his arms—held in front of him as a buckler—and it was from these poor devils that those awful screams were coming. I jumped in front of the Dyaks and yelled to them in Malay to hold their fire; but O'Hara thrust me aside, and *shooed* the Dyaks on with shouts and curses and peals of laughter, slapping his palm on his gunstock, and capering with delight and excitement. The

Dyaks took no sort of heed of me, and the volleys met the Muruts like a wall of lead.

"I had slipped and fallen when O'Hara pushed me, and as I clambered on to my feet again I saw the mob of savages fall together and crumple up, for all the world as paper crumples when burned suddenly. Most of them fell back into the dark interior of the hut, writhing in convulsions above the litter of the dead; but one or two pitched forward headlong to the ground, and I saw a little brown baby, which had escaped unharmed, crawling about over the corpses, and squeaking like a wounded rabbit. I ran forward to save it, but a Dyak was too quick for me, and before I could get near it, he had thrown himself upon it, and . . *ugh!*

"The Muruts began cutting their way through the flooring then, and trying to bolt into the jungle. One or two of them got away, I think; and this threw O'Hara into such a passion of fury that I half expected to see him kill some of the Dyaks. He tore around to the side of the hut, and I saw him brain one Murut as he made a rush from under the low floor. One end of the building was in roaring flames by this time, and half a dozen Dyaks had gone in at the other end and were bolting the wretched creatures from their hiding places, just as ferrets bolt rabbits from their burrows, while O'Hara and the other Dyaks waited for them outside. They hardly missed one of them, sparing neither age nor sex, though I ran from one to another like a madman, trying to prevent them. It was awful . . . awful! and I was fairly blubbering with the horror of it, and with the consciousness of my own impotence. I was regularly broken up by it, and I remember at the last sitting down upon a log, burying my face in my hands, and crying like a child.

"The thing seemed to be over by then: there was no more bolting, and the Dyaks were beginning to clear out of the hut as the flames gained ground and made the place too hot for them. But, at the last, there came a terrific yell from the very heart of the fire, and a single Murut leaped out of the smoke. He was stark naked, for his loin clout had been burned to tinder; he was blackened by the smoke, and his long hair was afire behind him! His mouth was wide, and the cries that came from it went through and through my head, running up and up the scale till they hit upon a note the shrillness of which agonised me. Surrounded by the flames, he looked like a devil in the heart of the pit. In one scorched arm he brandished a long knife, the blade of which was red with the glare of the flames, and in the other was the sheath, blazing at one end, and decked at the other by a great tuft of yellow hair that was smouldering damply.

"As soon as he saw him O'Hara raised a terrible cry and threw himself at him. The two men grappled and fell, the knife and scabbard escaping from the Murut's grasp and pitching straight into the fire. The struggle lasted for nearly a minute, O'Hara and his enemy rolling over and over one another, breathing heavily but making no other sound. Then something happened —I don't clearly know what; but the Murut's head dropped, and O'Hara rose up from his dead body, moving very stiffly. He stood for a moment so, looking round him in a dazed fashion,

until his eyes caught mine. Then he staggered toward me, reeling like a tipsy man.

"'Mother of heaven!' he said thickly, 'what *have* I done?'

"He stared round him at the little brown corpses, doubled up in dislocated and distorted attitudes, and his eyes were troubled.

"'God forgive me!' he muttered. 'God forgive me!'

"Then he spun about on his heel, his hands outstretched above his head, his fingers clutching at the air, a thin foam forming on his lips, and before I could reach him he had toppled over in a limp leap upon the ground.

"I had an awful business getting O'Hara down-country. He was mad as a March hare for three weeks. But the Dyaks worked like bricks—though I could not bear the sight of them—and the currents of the rivers were in our favour when we reached navigable water. I know that O'Hara was mad that morning—no white man could have acted as he did unless he had been insane—and he always swears that he has no recollection of anything that occurred after the Dyaks rescued him. I hope it may be so, but I am not certain. He is a changed man anyway, as nervous and jumpy as they make 'em, and I know that he is always brooding over that up-country trip of ours."

"Yes," I assented, "and he is constantly telling the first part of the story to every chance soul he meets."

"Exactly," said Bateman. "That is what makes me sometimes doubt the completeness of his oblivion concerning what followed. What do *you* think?"

An Adventure

It was in that wood yonder, behind the creek, that it happened, sir. My father, the kingdom of Heaven be his, was taking five hundred roubles to the master; in those days our fellows and the Shepelevsky peasants used to rent land from the master, so father was taking money for the half-year. He was a God-fearing man, he used to read the scriptures, and as for cheating or wronging anyone, or defrauding—God forbid, and the peasants honored him greatly, and when someone had to be sent to the town about taxes or such-like, or with money, they used to send him. He was a man above the ordinary, but, not that I'd speak ill of him, he had a weakness. He was fond of a drop. There was no getting him past a tavern: he would go in, drink a glass, and be completely done for! He was aware of this weakness in himself, and when he was carrying public money, that he might not fall asleep or lose it by some chance, he always took me or my sister Anyutka with him.

To tell the truth, all our family have a great taste for vodka. I can read and write, I served for six years at a tobacconist's in the town, and I can talk to any educated gentleman, and can use very fine language, but, it is perfectly true, sir, as I read in a book, that vodka is the blood of Satan. Through vodka my face has darkened. And there is nothing seemly about me, and here, as you may see, sir, I am a cab-driver like an ignorant, uneducated peasant.

And so, as I was telling you, father was taking the money to the master, Anyutka was going with him, and at that time Anyutka was seven or maybe eight—a silly chit, not that high. He got as far as Kalantchiko successfully; he was sober, but when he reached Kalantchiko and went into Moiseika's tavern, this same weakness of his came upon him. He drank three glasses and set to bragging before people:

"I am a plain humble man," he says, "but I have five hundred roubles in my pocket; if I like," says he, "I could buy up the tavern and all the crockery and Moiseika and his Jewess and his little Jews. I can buy it all out and out," he said. That was his way of joking, to be sure, but then he began complaining: "It's a worry, good Christian people," said he, "to be a rich man, a merchant, or anything of that kind. If you have no money you have no care, if you have money you must watch over your pocket the whole time that wicked men may not rob you. It's a terror to live in the world for a man who has a lot of money."

The drunken people listened of course, took it in, and made a note of it. And in those days they were making a railway line at Kalantchiko, and there were swarms and swarms of tramps and vagabonds of all sorts like locusts. Father pulled himself up afterwards, but it was too late. A word is not a sparrow, if it flies out you can't catch it. They drove, sir, by the wood, and all at once there was someone

galloping on horseback behind them. Father was not of the chicken-hearted brigade—that I couldn't say—but he felt uneasy; there was no regular road through the wood, nothing went that way but hay and timber, and there was no cause for anyone to be galloping there, particularly in working hours. One wouldn't be galloping after any good.

"It seems as though they are after someone," said father to Anyutka, "they are galloping so furiously. I ought to have kept quiet in the tavern, a plague on my tongue. Oh, little daughter, my heart misgives me, there is something wrong!"

He did not spend long in hesitation about his dangerous position, and he said to my sister Anyutka:

"Things don't look very bright, they really are in pursuit. Anyway, Anyutka dear, you take the money, put it away in your skirts, and go hide behind a bush. If by ill-luck they attack me, you run back to mother, and give her the money. Let her take it to the village elder. Only mind you don't let anyone see you; keep to the wood and by the creek, that no one may see you. Run your best and call on the merciful God. Christ be with you!"

Father thrust the parcel of notes on Anyutka, and she looked out the thickest of the bushes and hid herself. Soon after, three men on horseback galloped up to father. One a stalwart, big-jawed fellow, in crimson shirt and high boots, and the other two, ragged, shabby fellows, navvies from the line. As my father feared, so it really turned out, sir. The one in the crimson shirt, the sturdy, strong fellow, a man above the ordinary, left his horse, and all three made for father.

"Halt you, so-and-so! Where's the money!"

"What money? Go to the devil!"

"Oh, the money you are taking the master for the rent. Hand it over, you bald devil, or we will throttle you, and you'll die in your sins."

And they began to practice their villainy on father, and, instead of beseeching them, weeping, or anything of the sort, father got angry and began to reprove them with the greatest severity.

"What are you pestering me for?" said he. "You are a dirty lot. There is no fear of God in you, plague take you! It's not money you want, but a beating, to make your backs smart for three years after. Be off, blockheads, or I shall defend myself. I have a revolver that takes six bullets, it's in my bosom!"

But his words did not deter the robbers, and they began beating him with anything they could lay their hands on.

They looked through everything in the cart, searched my father thoroughly, even taking off his boots; when they found that beating father only made him swear at them the more, they began torturing him in all sorts of ways. All the time Anyutka was sitting behind the bush, and she saw it all, poor dear. When she saw father lying on the ground and gasping, she started off and ran her hardest through the thicket and the creek towards home. She was only a little girl, with no understanding; she did not know the way, just ran on not knowing where she was going. It was some six miles to our home. Anyone else might have run there in an hour, but a little child, as

we all know, takes two steps back to one forward, and indeed it is not everyone who can run barefoot through the prickly bushes; you want to be used to it, too, and our girls used always to be crowding together on the stove or in the yard, and were afraid to run in the forest.

Towards evening Anyutka somehow reached a habitation; she looked, it was a hut. It was the forester's hut, in the Crown forest; some merchants were renting it at the time and burning charcoal. She knocked. A woman, the forester's wife, came out to her. Anyutka, first of all, burst out crying, and told her everything just as it was, and even told her about the money. The forester's wife was full of pity for her.

"My poor little dear! Poor mite, God has preserved you, poor little one! My precious! Come into the hut, and I will give you something to eat."

She began to make up to Anyutka, gave her food and drink, and even wept with her, and was so attentive to her that the girl, only think, gave her the parcel of notes.

"I will put it away, darling, and tomorrow morning I will give it you back and take you home, dearie."

The woman took the money, and put Anyutka to sleep on the stove where at the time the brooms were drying. And on the same stove, on the brooms, the forester's daughter, a girl as small as our Anyutka, was asleep. And Anyutka used to tell us afterwards that there was such a scent from the brooms, they smelt of honey! Anyutka lay down, but she could not get to sleep, she kept crying quietly; she was sorry for father, and terrified. But, sir, an hour or two passed, and she saw those very three robbers who had tortured father walk into the hut; and the one in the crimson shirt, with big jaws, their leader, went up to the woman and said:

"Well, wife, we have simply murdered a man for nothing. Today we killed a man at dinner time. We killed him all right, but not a farthing did we find."

So this fellow in the crimson shirt turned out to be the forester, the woman's husband.

"The man's dead for nothing," said his ragged companions. "In vain we have take a sin on our souls."

The forester's wife looked at all three and laughed.

"What are you laughing at, silly?"

"I am laughing because I haven't murdered anyone, and I have not taken any sin on my soul, but I have found the money."

"What money? What nonsense are you talking!"

"Here, look whether I am talking nonsense."

The forester's wife untied the parcel and, wicked woman, showed them the money. Then she described how Anyutka had come, what she had said, and so on. The murderers were delighted and began to divide the money between them; they almost quarreled, then they sat down to the table, you know, to drink. And Anyutka lay there, poor child, hearing every word and shaking like a Jew in a frying pan. What was she to do? And from their words she learned that father was dead and lying across the road, and she fancied, in her foolishness, that the wolves and the dogs would eat father, and that our horse had gone far away

into the forest, and would be eaten by wolves, too, and that she, Anyutka herself, would be put in prison and beaten, because she had not taken care of the money. The robbers got drunk and sent the woman for vodka. They gave her five roubles for vodka and sweet wine. They set to singing and drinking on other people's money. They drank and drank, the dogs, and sent the woman off again that they might drink beyond all bounds.

"We will keep it up till morning," they cried. "We have plenty of money now, there is no need to spare! Drink, and don't drink away your wits."

And so at midnight, when they were all fairly fuddled, the woman ran off for vodka the third time, and the forester strode twice up and down the cottage, and he was staggering.

"Look here, lads," he said, "we must make away with the girl, too! If we leave her, she will be the first to bear witness against us."

They talked it over and discussed it, and decided that Anyutka must not be left alive, that she must be killed. Of course, to murder an innocent child is a fearful thing, even a man drunken or crazy would not take such a job on himself. They were quarreling for maybe an hour which was to kill her, one tried to put it on the other, they almost fought again, and no one would agree to do it; then they cast lots. It fell to the forester. He drank another full glass, cleared his throat, and went to the outer room for an axe.

But Anyutka was a sharp wench. For all she was to simple, she thought of something that, I must say, not many an educated man would have thought of. Maybe the Lord had compassion on her, and gave her sense for the moment, or perhaps it was that fright sharpened her wits. Anyway when it came to the test it turned out that she was cleverer than anyone. She got up stealthily, prayed to God, took the little sheepskin, the one the forester's wife had put over her, and, you understand, the forester's little daughter, a girl of the same age as herself, was lying on the stove beside her. She covered this girl with the sheepskin, and took the woman's jacket off her and threw it over herself. Disguised herself, in fact. She put it over her head, and so walked across the hut by the drunken men, and they thought it was the forester's daughter, and did not even look at her. Luckily for her the woman was not in the hut; she had gone for vodka, or maybe she would not have escaped the axe, for a woman's eyes are as far-seeing as a buzzard's. A woman's eyes are sharp.

Anyutka came out of the hut, and ran as fast as her legs could carry her. All night she was lost in the forest, but towards morning she came out to the edge and ran along the road. By the mercy of God she met the clerk, Yegor Danilitch, the kingdom of Heaven be his. He was going along with his hooks to catch fish. Anyutka told him all about it. He went back quicker than he came—thought no more of the fish—gathered the peasants together in the village, and off they went to the forester's.

They got there, and all the murderers were lying side by side, dead drunk, each where he had fallen; the woman, too, was drunk. First thing they searched them; they took the money and then looked on the stove—the

Holy Cross be with us! The forester's child was lying on the brooms, under the sheepskin, and her head was in a pool of blood, chopped off by the axe. They roused the peasants and the woman, tied their hands behind them, and took them to the district court; the woman howled, but the forester only shook his head and asked:

"You might give me a drop, lads! My head aches!"

Afterwards they were tried in the town in due course, and punished with the utmost rigor of the law.

The White Whale

THE morning dawned fair and fresh, and the solitary night man at the foremasthead of the ship *Pequod* was relieved by crowds of the daylight lookouts, who dotted every mast and almost every spar.

"D'ye see him?" cried Ahab the pagan captain; but the whale was not yet in sight.

"In his infallible wake, though; but follow that wake, that's all. Helm there; steady, as thou goest, and hast been going. These warm Trade Winds, at least, that in the clear heavens blow straight on, in strong and steadfast, vigorous mildness; and veer not from their mark, however the baser currents of the sea may turn and tack, and mightiest Mississippis of the land shift and swerve about, uncertain where to go at last. And by the eternal Poles! these same Trades that so directly blow my good ship on; these Trades, or something like them—something so unchangeable, and full as strong, blow my keeled soul along! To it! Aloft there! What d'ye see?"

"Nothing, sir."

"Nothing! and noon at hand! The doubloon goes abegging! See the sun! Aye, aye, it must be so. I've oversailed him. How, got the start? Aye, he's chasing *me* now; not I, *him*—that's bad; I might have known it, too. Fool! the lines—the harpoons he's towing. Aye, aye, I have run him by last night. About! about! Come down, all of ye, but the regular lookouts! Man the braces!"

Steering as she had done, the wind had been somewhat on the *Pequod's* quarter, so that now being pointed in the reverse direction, the braced ship sailed hard upon the breeze as she rechurned the cream in her own white wake.

"Against the wind he now steers for the open jaw," murmured Starbuck the mate to himself, as he coiled the new-hauled main-brace upon the rail. "God keep us, but already my bones feel damp within me, and from the inside wet my flesh. I misdoubt me that I disobey my God in obeying him!"

"Stand by to sway me up!" cried Ahab, advancing to the hempen basket. "We should meet him soon."

"Aye, aye, sir," and straightway Starbuck did Ahab's bidding, and once more Ahab swung on high.

A whole hour now passed; gold-beaten out to ages. Time itself now held long breaths with keen suspense. But at last, some three points off the

weather-bow, Ahab descried the spout again, and instantly from the three mastheads three shrieks went up as if the tongues of fire had voiced it.

"Forehead to forehead I meet thee, this third time, Moby Dick! On deck there!—brace sharper up; crowd her into the wind's eye. He's too far off to lower yet, Mr. Starbuck. The sails shake! Stand over that helmsman with a topmaul! So, so; he travels fast, and I must down. Good-bye, masthead—keep a good eye upon the whale, the while I'm gone. We'll talk tomorrow, nay, to-night, when the white whale lies down there, tied by head and tail."

He gave the word; and still gazing round him, was steadily lowered through the cloven blue air to the deck.

In due time the boats were lowered; but as standing in his shallop's stern, Ahab just hovered upon the point of the descent, he waved to the mate,—who held one of the tackle-ropes on deck—and bade him pause.

"Starbuck!"

"Sir?"

"For the third time my soul's ship starts upon this voyage, Starbuck."

"Aye, sir, thou wilt have it so."

"Some ships sail from their ports, and ever afterwards are missing, Starbuck!"

"Truth, sir: saddest truth."

"Some men die at ebb tide; some at low water; some at the full of the flood;—and I feel now like a billow that's all one crested comb, Starbuck. I am old;—shake hands with me, man."

Their hands met; their eyes fastened; Starbuck's tears the glue.

"Oh, my captain, my captain!—noble heart—go not—go not!—see, it's a brave man that weeps; how great the agony of the persuasion then!"

"Lower away!"—cried Ahab, tossing the mate's arm from him. "Stand by the crew!"

In an instant the boat was pulling round close under the stern.

"The sharks! the sharks!" cried a voice from the low cabin-window there; "O master, my master, come back!"

But Ahab heard nothing; for his own voice was high-lifted then; and the boat leaped on.

Yet the voice spake true; for scarce had he pushed from the ship, when numbers of sharks, seemingly rising from out the dark waters beneath the hull, maliciously snapped at the blades of the oars, every time they dipped in the water; and in this way accompanied the boat with their bites. It is a thing not uncommonly happening to the whale-boats in those swarming seas; the sharks at times apparently following them in the same prescient way that vultures hover over the banners of marching regiments in the East. But these were the first sharks that had been observed by the *Pequod* since the White Whale had been first descried; and whether it was that Ahab's crew were all such tiger-yellow barbarians, and therefore their flesh more musky to the sense of the sharks—a matter sometimes well known to affect them,—however it was, they seemed to follow that one boat without molesting the others.

"Heart of wrought steel!" murmured Starbuck, gazing over the side, and following with his eyes the receding boat —"canst thou yet ring boldly to that sight?—lowering thy keel among ravening sharks, and followed by them, open-

mouthed, to the chase. Oh! my God! what is this that shoots through me, and leaves me so deadly calm, yet expectant,—fixed at the top of a shudder! Future things swim before me, as in empty outlines and skeletons; all the past is somehow grown dim. Strangest problems of life seem clearing; but clouds sweep between—Is my journey's end coming? My legs feel faint; like his who has footed it all day. Feel thy heart,—beats it yet?—Stir thyself, Starbuck!—stave it off—move, move! speak aloud!—Masthead there! —aloft there!—keep thy keenest eye upon the boats:—mark well the whale!—Ho! again!—drive off that hawk! see! he pecks—he tears the vane"—pointing to the red flag flying at the main-truck—"Ha! he soars away with it!—Where's the old man now? see'st thou that sight, Oh Ahab!—shudder, shudder!"

The boats had not gone very far, when by a signal from the mastheads—a downward pointed arm, Ahab knew that the whale had sounded; but intending to be near him at the next rising, he held on his way a little sideways from the vessel; the becharmed crew maintaining the profoundest silence, as the head-beat waves hammered and hammered against the opposing bow.

"Drive, drive in your nails, oh ye waves! to their uttermost heads drive them in! ye but strike a thing without a lid; and no coffin and no hearse can be mine:—and hemp only can kill me! Ha! ha!"

Suddenly the waters around them slowly swelled in broad circles; then quickly upheaved, as if sideways sliding from a submerged berg of ice, swiftly rising to the surface. A low rumbling sound was heard; a subterraneous hum; and then all held their breaths; as bedraggled with trailing ropes, and harpoons, and lances, a vast form shot lengthwise, but obliquely from the sea. Shrouded in a thin drooping veil of mist, it hovered for a moment in the rainbowed air; and then fell swamping back into the deep. Crushed thirty feet upwards, the waters flashed for an instant like heaps of fountains, then brokenly sank in a shower of flakes, leaving the circling surface creamed like new milk round the marble trunk of the whale.

"Give way!" cried Ahab to the oarsmen and the boats darted forward to the attack; but maddened Moby Dick seemed combinedly possessed by all the angels that fell from heaven. The wide tiers of welded tendons overspreading his broad white forehead, beneath the transparent skin, looked knitted together; as head on, he came churning his tail among the boats; and flailed them apart; spilling out the irons and lances from the two mates' boats, and dashing in one side of the upper part of their bows, but leaving Ahab's almost without a scar.

While Daggoo and Queequeg were stopping the strained planks; and as the whale swimming out from them, turned, and showed one entire flank as he shot by them again; at that moment a quick cry went up. Lashed round and round to the fish's back; pinioned in the turns upon turns in which, during the night, the whale had reeled the involutions of the lines around him, the half torn body of a Parsee was seen; his sable raiment

frayed to shreds; his distended eyes turned full upon old Ahab.

The harpoon dropped from his hand.

"Befooled, befooled!"—drawing in a long lean breath—"Aye, Parsee! I see thee again.—Aye, and thou goest before; this, *this* then is the hearse. Where is the second hearse? Away, mates, to the ship! those boats are useless now; repair them if ye can in time, and return to me; if not, Ahab is enough to die—Down, men! the first thing that but offers to jump from this boat I stand in, that thing I harpoon. Ye are not other men, but my arms and my legs; and so obey me.—Where's the whale? gone down again?"

But he looked too nigh the boat; for as if bent upon escaping with the corpse he bore, and as if the particular place of the last encounter had been but a stage in his leeward voyage, Moby Dick was now again steadily swimming forward; and had almost passed the ship,—which thus far had been sailing in the contrary direction to him, though for the present her headway had been stopped. He seemed swimming with his utmost velocity, and now only intent upon pursuing his own straight path in the sea.

"Oh! Ahab," cried Starbuck, "not too late is it, even now, to desist. See! Moby Dick seeks thee not. It is thou, thou, that madly seekest him!"

Setting sail to the rising wind, the lonely boat was swiftly impelled to leeward, by both oars and canvas. And at last when Ahab was sliding by the vessel, so near as plainly to distinguish Starbuck's face as he leaned over the rail, he hailed him to turn the vessel about, and follow him, not too swiftly, at a judicious interval. Glancing upwards, he saw Tashtego, Queequeg, and Daggoo, eagerly mounting to the three mastheads; while the oarsmen were rocking in the two staved boats which had just been hoisted to the side, and were busily at work in repairing them. One after the other, through the portholes, as he sped, he also caught flying glimpses of Stubb and Flask, busying themselves on deck among bundles of new irons and lances. As he saw all this; as he heard the hammers in the broken boats; far other hammers seemed driving a nail into his heart. But he rallied. And now marking that the vane or flag was gone from the main masthead, he shouted to Tashtego, who had just gained that perch, to descend again for another flag, and a hammer and nails, and so nail it to the mast.

Whether fagged by the running chase, and the resistance to his swimming in the knotted hamper he bore; or whether it was some latent deceitfulness and malice in him: whichever was true, the White Whale's way now began to abate, as it seemed, from the boat so rapidly nearing him once more; though indeed the whale's last start had not been so long a one as before. And still as Ahab glided over the waves the unpitying sharks accompanied him; and so pertinaciously stuck to the boat; and so continually bit at the plying oars, that the blades became jagged and crunched, and left small splinters in the sea, at almost every dip.

"Heed them not! those teeth but give new rowlocks to your oars. Pull on! 'tis the better rest, the shark's jaw than the yielding water."

"But at every bite, sir, the thin blades grow smaller and smaller!"

"They will last long enough! pull on!—But who can tell"—he muttered —"whether these sharks swim to feast on a whale or on Ahab?—But pull on! Aye, all alive, now—we near him. The helm! take the helm; let me pass,"—and so saying, two of the oarsmen helped him forward to the bows of the still flying boat.

At length as the craft was cast to one side, and ran ranging along with the White Whale's flank, he seemed strangely oblivious of its advance—as the whale sometimes will—and Ahab was fairly within the smoky mountain mist, which, thrown off from the whale's spout, curled round his great, Monadnock hump. He was even thus close to him; when, with body arched back, and both arms lengthwise high-lifted to the poise, he darted his fierce iron, and his far fiercer curse into the hated whale. As both steel and curse sank to the socket, as if sucked into a morass, Moby Dick sideways writhed; spasmodically rolled his nigh flank against the bow, and, without staving a hole in it, so suddenly canted the boat over, that had it not been for the elevated part of the gunwale to which he then clung, Ahab would once more have been tossed into the sea. As it was, three of the oarsmen—who foreknew not the precise instant of the dart, and were therefore unprepared for its effects—these were flung out; but so fell, that, in an instant two of them clutched the gunwale again, and rising to its level on a combing wave, hurled themselves bodily inboard again; the third man helplessly drooping astern, but still afloat and swimming.

Almost simultaneously, with a mighty volition of ungraduated, instantaneous swiftness, the White Whale darted through the weltering sea. But when Ahab cried out to the steersman to take new turns with the line, and hold it so; and commanded the crew to turn round on their seats, and tow the boat up to the mark; the moment the treacherous line felt that double strain and tug, it snapped in the empty air!

"What breaks in me? Some sinew cracks!—'tis whole again; oars! oars! Burst in upon him!"

Hearing the tremendous rush of the sea-crashing boat, the whale wheeled round to present his blank forehead at bay; but in that evolution, catching sight of the nearing black hull of the ship; seemingly seeing in it the source of all his persecutions; bethinking it —it may be—a larger and nobler foe; of a sudden, he bore down upon its advancing prow, smiting his jaws amid fiery showers of foam.

Ahab staggered; his hand smote his forehead. "I grow blind; hands! stretch out before me that I may yet grope my way. Is't nigh?"

"The whale! The ship!" cried the cringing oarsmen.

"Oars! oars! Slope downwards to thy depths, O sea, that ere it be for ever too late, Ahab may slide this last, last time upon his mark! I see: the ship! the ship! Dash on, my men! Will ye not save my ship?"

But as the oarsmen violently forced their boat through the sledge-hammering seas, and before whale-smitten bow-ends of two planks burst through, and in an instant almost, the temporarily disabled boat lay nearly level with the waves; its half-wading, spashing crew, trying hard to stop the gap and bale out the pouring water.

Meantime, for that one beholding instant, Tashtego's masthead hammer remained suspended in his hand; and the red flag, half-wrapping him as with a plaid, then streamed itself straight out from him, as his own forward-flowing heart; while Starbuck and Stubb, standing upon the howsprit beneath, caught sight of the down-coming monster just as soon as he.

"The whale, the whale! Up helm, up helm! Oh, all ye sweet powers of air, now hug me close! Let not Starbuck die, if die he must, in a woman's fainting fit. Up helm, I say—ye fools, the jaw! the jaw! Is this the end of all my bursting prayers? all my life-long fidelities? Oh, Ahab, Ahab, lo, thy work. Steady! helmsman, steady. Nay, nay! Up helm again! He turns to meet us! Oh, his unappeasable brow drives on toward one, whose duty tells him he cannot depart. My God, stand by me now!

"Stand not by me, but stand under me, whoever you are that will now help Stubb; for Stubb, too, sticks here. I grin at thee, thou grinning whale! Whoever helped Stubb, or kept Stubb awake, but Stubb's own unwinking eye? And now poor Stubb goes to bed upon a mattress that is all too soft; would it were stuffed with brushwood! I grin at thee, thou grinning whale! Look ye, sun, moon and stars! I call ye assassins of as good a fellow as ever spouted up his ghost. For all that, I would yet ring glasses with ye, would ye but hand the cup! Oh, oh, oh, oh! thou grinning whale, but there'll be plenty of gulping soon! Why fly ye not, O, Ahab? For me, off shoes and jacket to it, let Stubb die in his drawers! A most moldy and over-salted death, though;—cherries! cherries! cherries! Oh, Flask, for one red cherry ere we die!

"Cherries? I only wish that we were where they grow. Oh, Stubb, I hope my poor mother's drawn my part-pay ere this; if not, few coppers will come to her now, for the voyage is up."

From the ship's bows, nearly all the seamen now hung inactive; hammers, bits of plank, lances, and harpoons, mechanically retained in their hands, just as they had darted from their various employments; all their enchanted eyes intent upon the whale, which from side to side strangely vibrating his predestinating head, sent a broad band of overspreading semicircular foam before him as he rushed. Retribution, swift vengeance, eternal malice were in his whole aspect, and spite of all that mortal man could do, the solid white buttress of his forehead smote the ship's starboard bow, till men and timbers reeled. Some fell flat upon their faces. Like dislodged trucks, the heads of the harpooneers aloft shook on their bull-like necks. Through the breach, they heard the waters pour, as mountain torrents down a flume.

"The ship! The hearse!—the second hearse!" cried Ahab from the boat; "its wood could only be American!"

Diving beneath the settling ship, the whale ran quivering along its keel; but turning under water, swiftly shot to the surface again, far off the other bow, but within a few yards of Ahab's boat, where for a time, he lay quiescent.

"I turn my body from the sun. What ho, Tashtego! let me hear thy hammer. Oh! ye three unsurrendered spires of mine; thou uncracked keel; and only god-bullied hull; thou firm deck, and haughty helm, and Pole-pointed prow,

—death-glorious ship! must ye then perish, and without me? Am I cut off from the last fond pride of meanest shipwrecked captains? Oh, lonely death on lonely life! Oh, now I feel my topmost greatness lies in my topmost grief. Ho, ho! from all your furthest bounds, pour ye now in, ye bold billows of my whole foregone life, and top this one piled comber of my death! Toward thee I roll, thou all-destroying but unconquering whale; to the last I grapple with thee; from hell's heart I stab at thee; for hate's sake I spit my last breath at thee. Sink all coffins and all hearses to one common pool! and since neither can be mine let me then tow to pieces, while still chasing thee, though tied to thee, thou damned whale! *Thus,* I give up the spear!"

The harpoon was darted; the stricken whale flew forward; with igniting velocity the line ran through the groove; ran foul. Ahab stopped to clear it; he did clear it; but the flying turn caught him round the neck, and voicelessly as Turkish mutes bow-string their victim, he was shot out of the boat, ere the crew knew he was gone. Next instant, the heavy eyesplice in the rope's final end flew out of the stark-empty tub, knocked down an oarsman, and smiting the sea, disappeared in its depths.

For an instant, the tranced boat's crew stood still; then turned. "The ship? Great God, where is the ship?" Soon they through dim, bewildering mediums saw her sidelong fading phantom, as in the gaseous Fata Morgana; only the uppermost masts out of water; while fixed by infatuation, or fidelity, or fate, to their once lofty perches, the pagan harpooneers still maintained their sinking lookouts on the sea. And now, concentric circles seized the lone boat itself and all its crew, and each floating oar, and every lance-pole, and spinning animate and inanimate, all round and round in one vortex, carried the smallest chip of the *Pequod* out of sight.

But as the last whelmings intermixingly poured themselves over the sunken head of the Indian at the mainmast, leaving a few inches of the erect spar yet visible, together with long streaming yards of the flag, which calmly undulated, with ironical coincidings, over the destroying billows they almost touched;—at that instant, a red arm and a hammer hovered backwardly uplifted in the open air, in the act of nailing the flag faster and yet faster to the subsiding spar. A sky-hawk that tauntingly had followed the main-truck downwards from its natural home among the stars, pecking at the flag, and incommoding Tashtego there; this bird now chanced to intercept its broad fluttering wing between the hammer and the wood; and simultaneously feeling that ethereal thrill, the submerged savage beneath, in his death-gasp, kept his hammer frozen there; and so the bird of heaven, with unearthly shrieks, and his imperial beak thrust upwards, and his whole captive form folded in the flag of Ahab, went down with his ship, which, like Satan, would not sink to hell till she had dragged a living part of heaven along with her, and helmeted herself with it.

Now small fowls flew screaming over the yet yawning gulf; a sullen white surf beat against its steep sides; then all collapsed, and the great shroud of the sea rolled on as it rolled five thousand years ago.

A Moonlight Adventure

THE château is six miles from Tours. From Mesnil-Rouge I can see the slate roofs buried in the verdure of the park. They call it the Château-of-the-Sleeping-Beauty, because it was formerly inhabited by a lord who nearly married one of his milkmaids there. The dear child lived shut up in it, and I think her ghost returned to the place. Never did stones possess such a perfume of love.

The Beauty who sleeps there now is the old Countess de M——, one of Adeline's aunts. For the last thirty years she has been coming to pass a winter at Paris. Each of her nieces and nephews gives her a fortnight during the fine weather. Adeline is very punctual. Besides, she likes the château, a legendary ruin, which is crumbling to pieces under the influence of rain and wind, in the center of a virgin forest.

The elderly countess has given formal orders that neither the ceilings, which are a network of cracks, nor the stray branches that bar the walks, are to be touched. She enjoys the sight of the wall of foliage that thickens there each spring, and she frequently remarks that the building is more solid than herself. The truth of the matter is that an entire wing is on the ground. Those pleasant retreats, built under Louis XV, were as transient as the love-making of the period. The plaster-work is full of fissures, the floors have given way, and moss has penetrated even to the alcoves. The damp atmosphere of the park has given to the place a freshness, through which, however, the musky perfume of the tenderness of other times still passes.

The park threatens to invade the mansion. Trees have grown up at the foot of the perrons and in the clefts of the steps. Only the broad avenue can be used for driving; and even then the coachman has to lead his horses by the bridles. To right and left the underwood is virgin, crossed by a few rare paths, which are dark with shade, and along which you advance with your hands stretched out in front of you, putting aside the grass. And the great trees that have fallen down make blind alleys of these bits of roads, whilst the contracted glades resemble wells opening on the blue of heaven. Moss hangs from the branches, and the woody nightshade forms a curtain beneath the brushwood; the swarming of insects, the murmur of birds that you do not see, give strange life to this enormous mass of foliage. I have often experienced little shudders of fright, on my way to pay the countess a visit; the woods wafted a disquieting breath to the back of my neck.

But there is a particularly delicious and disturbing corner in the park: it is to the left of the château, at the extremity of a flower-garden, where the only things that grow now are poppies as tall as myself. There is a grotto beneath a cluster of trees, buried in a drapery of ivy, the ends of which trail on the grass. The grotto which has been overrun, concealed, is nothing more than a dark recess, in the depths of which one perceives the whiteness of a smiling plaster Cupid with a finger on

his mouth. The poor boy-god has but one arm, and on his right eye is a patch of moss which makes him half blind. He seems to be watching, with his sickly smile of an invalid, over some amorous lady who has been dead for a century.

Sparkling water, issuing from the grotto, expands in a broad sheet in the center of the glade, and then escapes by a brook which is lost beneath the leaves. It is a natural pond, with a sandy bottom, on which the great trees cast their shadows; an aperture showing blue sky forms an azure spot in the center of the pond. Rushes have grown and water-lilies have unfurled their round leaves there. One hears naught in the emerald daylight of this globe of verdure, which seems to have issues above and below on the lake of open air, but the melody of the water, ever falling, with an appearance of sweet lassitude. Long waterflies are skating in a corner. A chaffinch comes to drink with dainty manners, fearing to wet its claws. A sudden rustling of the leaves produces an effect on the pond, comparable to a virgin beating her eyelids in a swoon. And from the darkness of the grotto, the plaster Cupid ordains silence, repose, and absolute discretion on the part of woods and water, as regards this voluptuous corner of nature.

When Adeline grants her aunt a fortnight, this wild spot becomes civilized. The walks must be widened, so that Adeline's skirts may be able to pass along them. She arrived, this season, with thirty-two trunks, which had to be carried on men's shoulders, because the railway-van has never dared venture among the trees. It would have stayed there, I vow, if it had.

Besides, Adeline is a savage, as you know. Between you and me she is cracked—there. At the convent she was troubled with imaginations that were really very funny. I suspect her of coming to the Château-of-the-Sleeping-Beauty to satisfy her appetite for extravagance, far away from the inquisitive. The aunt remains seated in her arm-chair; the château belongs to the dear child, who must have the most extraordinary fantastical dreams there. They relieve her. When she quits this hole, she behaves herself for a year.

During a fortnight, she is the fairy, the soul of the verdure. She may be perceived in gala toilette, airing her white lace and silken bows amidst the bushes. I have even been assured that she has been seen attired as a Pompadour marchioness with powder and patches, seated on the grass in the most deserted corner of the park. At other times a little fairy young man has been caught sight of walking along the alleys. I'm horribly afraid that the young man was naught else than this darling madcap.

I know she rummages about in the château from cellar to garret. She ferrets in all the most obscure corners, sounds the walls with her little fists, sniffs at all the dust of past ages with her pink nose. You may find her standing on steps, lost in the depths of huge cupboards, with her ear listening attentively at the windows, gazing dreamily in front of the chimneys, evidently actuated by the desire to climb up inside and have a look. Then, as she probably fails to find what she is in search of, she runs about the flower-garden where the tall poppies are, the paths dark with shade and the glades

bright with sun. She is always seeking, carrying her head very high, catching the distant vague perfume of a flower of tenderness which she cannot pluck.

Positively, the old château has an odor of love, amidst its wild-looking trees. A girl was shut up there, and the walls have preserved the perfume of that tenderness, like those old trunks in which bouquets of violets have been put away. I'd vow it is that scent that gets into Adeline's head and acts upon her senses. Then, when she has inhaled this perfume of old love, when she is overcome by it, she would set out on a ray of the moon to visit the land of fairy-tales, and would let herself be kissed on the forehead by all the cavaliers who happened to pass that way and were good enough to awaken her from her dream of a hundred years.

She has fits of languidness, and carries little stools into the wood to sit down. But, on very hot days, she finds relief in bathing, at night, in the pond beneath the lofty foliage. That is her retreat. She is the maid of the spring. The rushes show her tenderness. When she lets her skirts fall to the ground and enters the water, with all the tranquility of a Diana feeling confidence amidst the solitude, the plaster Cupid smiles at her. She has only water-lilies for a sash, but you must know that even the fish are discreetly slumbering. She swims softly, with her white shoulders protruding from the water, and any one might think it was a swan spreading out its wings and darting noiselessly along. The coolness calms her restlessness. She would be absolutely tranquil were it not for the one-armed Cupid smiling at her.

One night, she penetrated to the bottom of the grotto, in spite of the horrible fright the damp darkness gave her; and, standing on tip-toe, placed her ear to the Cupid's lips to see if he wouldn't tell her something.

The frightful part of the business, this season, is that when poor Adeline reached the château, she found Count Octave de R——, that tall young man, her mortal enemy, in possession of the best bed-room. It seems he is in some degree a cousin of old Madame de M——. Adeline has vowed she will dislodge him. She bravely undid her boxes, and recommenced her excursions and the endless quest. Octave quietly watched her from his window, for a week, smoking cigarettes. In the evening bitter words and sudden warfare had ceased. He was so polite, that she ended by thinking him a bore and troubled no more about him. He continued to smoke; she knocked about the park and took her baths.

She usually went to the sheet of water about midnight, when every one was asleep, and was particularly careful to find out whether Count Octave had blown out his candle. Then she crept downstairs as if she were going to meet her sweetheart, with desires that were quite sensual for the cold water. She had had exquisite little shudders of fright since she knew there was a man at the château. Supposing he opened a window, supposing he were to catch sight of a corner of her shoulder through the leaves! The thought of it alone made her shiver when she emerged, sparkling all over, from the water, and a ray of the moon whitened her statue-like nudity.

One night she went downstairs at about eleven o'clock. The château had

been buried in slumber for two long hours. That night she felt particularly bold. She had listened at the count's door, and had fancied she heard him snoring. Fie! a man who snores! That had made her feel great contempt for men, and caused her to long for the honest caress of the water, which sleeps so sweetly. She lingered beneath the trees, taking pleasure in unfastening her garments one by one. It was very dark, the moon was only just rising, and the dear child's white form merely cast a vague whiteness on the bank like that of a young birch-tree. Puffs of hot wind came from the heavens, and passed across her shoulders in warm kisses. She was quite at ease, rather languid, somewhat stifled by the heat, but full of a feeling of careless happiness, which made her try the spring with her foot as she stood on the bank.

The moon, however, was turning, and already lighting up a corner of the sheet of water. Then Adeline, in terror, perceived a head upon the surface which was gazing at her from this illuminated corner. She slid down, and when the water reached her chin, crossed her arms as if to bring all the trembling veil of the pond across her breast; then in an unsteady voice she inquired:

"Who is there?—What are you doing here?"

"It is I, madame," quietly answered Count Octave. "Don't be alarmed, I'm taking a bath."

A formidable silence ensued. On the sheet of water there was naught but ripples, which spread out slowly around Adeline's shoulders, and came to an end against the count's chest with a slight flopping sound. The latter quietly raised his arms, as if about to seize hold of a branch of willow to enable him to get out of the water.

"Remain where you are; I command you to do so," shouted Adeline in a terrified voice. "Get into the water again, get into the water at once!"

"But, madame," he answered, advancing until the water was up to his neck, "I've been here over an hour."

"That doesn't matter, sir, I will not have you get out, you understand. We'll wait."

The poor baroness was going crazy. She spoke of waiting, but hardly knowing why, her mind being quite upset by the perspective of the terrible events threatening her. Octave smiled.

"But," he ventured to remark, "it seems to me that by turning one's back ——"

"No, no, sir! Don't you see the moon!"

As a matter of fact the moon had advanced, and was falling in full upon the pond. It was a superb moon. The pond was shining amidst the dark leaves like a silver mirror; the rushes and water-lilies at the edges formed cleverly designed shadows, as if washed-in with a brush and indian ink. A warm shower of stars fell upon the basin through the small opening in the leaves. The stream of water ran behind Adeline with a low, mocking sound. She ventured to glance into the grotto, and saw the plaster Cupid smiling at her with a knowing look.

"The moon, certainly," murmured the count; "however, by turning one's back——"

"No, no a thousand times no. We'll wait until the moon's no longer there. You see, it is advancing. When it

reaches that tree we shall be in the shade."

"But, you see, it'll take a good hour before it gets behind that tree!"

"Oh! three-quarters of an hour at the most. That doesn't matter. We'll wait. When the moon is behind the tree you can retire."

The count wanted to protest; but, as he moved about as he spoke, and uncovered himself to the waist, she uttered such sharp little cries of distress that, out of politeness, he had to advance into the pond until the water reached his chin. He had the delicacy not to move. Then they both remained there, tête-à *tête* with a vengeance, one may say. The two heads, the baroness' adorable fair head with those great eyes that you remember, and the count's handsome head, set off with slightly ironical moustachios, stayed quietly, motionless on the smooth water, a yard or two from one another. The plaster Cupid grinned more broadly than ever from beneath his ivory drapery.

Adeline had thrown herself among the waterlilies. When the coolness of the bath had restored her, and she had made her preparations to pass an hour there, she perceived that the water was really shockingly limpid. She could see her naked feet on the sand at the bottom. It must be mentioned that the wicked moon was also bathing, rolling in the water, and filling it with its wriggling, eel-like rays. It was a bath of liquid, transparent gold. Perhaps the count was able to see the naked feet on the sand, and if he saw feet and head—Adeline covered herself under the water with a sash of water-lilies. Then she quietly drew the large round leaves that were floating on the surface around her, and made a broad collar of them. When dressed in that style she felt more at ease.

The count, however, had ended by taking the thing stoically. Not having come across a root wherein to sit, he had resigned himself to kneeling. And so as not to appear absolutely ridiculous, with water up to his chin like a man lost in a huge barber's dish, he had got into conversation with the countess, avoiding all that might remind her of the unpleasantness of their respective positions.

"It has been very warm today, madam."

"Yes, sir, oppressively hot. Fortunately, it is cooler in these shady places."

"Oh! certainly. This good aunt is a worthy person, is she not?"

"A worthy person, indeed."

Then they spoke about the last races and the balls already announced for the forthcoming winter. Adeline, who was beginning to feel cold, reflected that the count must have seen her whilst she loitered on the bank. That was simply horrible. Only she had doubts as to the importance of the mishap. It was dark under the trees, and the moon had not yet risen. Then, she remembered now, that she had stood behind the trunk of a great oak tree; that trunk must have covered her. But, in truth, this count was an abominable man. She hated him; she would have liked to have seen him slip down and drown himself. It was not she, indeed, who would have extended her hand to help him. Why, when he saw her advancing, did he not shout out that he was there, that he was taking a bath? The

question came so clearly to her mind that she could not withold it from her lips. She interrupted the count, who was talking about the latest shape of bonnets.

"But I was not aware," he answered. "I assure you I was very much afraid —you were all white. I thought it was the Sleeping-Beauty who was showing herself, you know, the girl who was shut up here. I was so frightened that I couldn't call out."

Within half-an-hour they were good friends. Adeline said to herself that she made no difficulty about wearing low-neck dresses at evening parties, and that she could therefore certainly show her shoulders. She had come out of the water a little, and had torn open her high gown, which inconvenienced her at the throat. Then she had risked her arms. She resembled a nymph of the spring, with her bare throat, her naked arms, and clothed in all that mass of verdure, which expanded and extended behind her like a long train of satin.

The count grew tender. He had obtained permission to make a few steps in order to get near a root. His teeth were beginning to chatter, and he gazed at the moon with great interest.

"Hey! it advances slowly," remarked Adeline.

"Eh! no, it has wings," he responded with a sigh.

She laughed, adding:

"We shall have to wait at least a quarter of an hour."

Then he took a cowardly advantage of the situation. He made her a declaration. He explained how he had been in love with her for two years, and that if he had teased her, it was because he had found that more amusing than paying her insipid compliments. Adeline, who was beginning to feel very anxious, pulled her green gown up to her throat, and thrust her arms into the sleeves. Only the tip of her rosy nose could be seen outside the waterlilies; and as the light of the moon fell full in her eyes, she felt quite giddy and dazzled. She had lost sight of the count, when all at once she heard a loud dabbling sound, and felt the agitated element rise to her lips.

"Will you have the kindness not to move?" she exclaimed. "Will you be good enough not to walk about like that in the water?"

"But I was not walking," said the count. "I slipped—I love you!"

"Hold your tongue, don't move, we'll talk of all that when it's dark. Wait till the moon is behind the tree."

The moon hid behind the tree. The plaster Cupid burst out laughing.

Ring of Thoth

Mr. John Vansittart Smith, F.R.S., of 147-A Gower Street, was a man whose energy of purpose and clearness of thought might have placed him in the very first rank of scientific observers. He was the victim, however, of a universal ambition which prompted him to aim at distinction in many subjects rather than pre-eminence in one. In his early days he had shown an apti-

tude for zoölogy and for botany which caused his friends to look upon him as a second Darwin, but when a professorship was almost within his reach, he had suddenly discontinued his studies and turned his whole attention to chemistry. Here his researches upon the spectra of the metals had won him his fellowship in the Royal Society; but again he played the coquette with his subject, and after a year's absence from the laboratory he joined the Oriental Society, and delivered a paper on the Hieroglyphic and Demotic inscriptions of El Kab, thus giving a crowning example both of the versatility and of the inconstancy of his talents.

The most fickle of wooers, however, is apt to be caught at last, and so it was with John Vansittart Smith. The more he burrowed his way into Egyptology the more impressed he became by the vast field which it opened to the inquirer, and by the extreme importance of a subject which promised to throw a light upon the first germs of human civilization and the origin of the greater part of our arts and sciences. So struck was Mr. Smith that he straightway married an Egyptological young lady who had written upon the sixth dynasty, and having thus secured a sound basis of operations, he set himself to collect materials for a work which should unite the research of Lepsius and the ingenuity of Champollion. The preparation of this *magnum opus* entailed many hurried visits to the magnificent Egyptian collections of the Louvre, upon the last of which, no longer ago than the middle of last October, he became involved in a most strange and noteworthy adventure.

The trains had been slow and the Channel had been rough, so that the student arrived in Paris in a somewhat befogged and feverish condition. On reaching the Hotel de France, in the Rue Lafitte, he had thrown himself upon a sofa for a couple of hours, but finding that he was unable to sleep, he determined, in spite of his fatigue, to make his way to the Louvre, settle the point which he had come to decide, and take the evening train back to Dieppe. Having come to this conclusion, he donned his great-coat, for it was a raw, rainy day, and made his way across the Boulevard des Italiens and down the Avenue de l'Opera. Once in the Louvre he was on familiar ground, and he speedily made his way to the collection of papyri which it was his intention to consult.

The warmest admirers of John Vansittart Smith could hardly claim for him that he was a handsome man. His high-beaked nose and prominent chin had something of the same acute and incisive character which distinguished his intellect. He held his head in a bird-like fashion, and bird-like, too, was the pecking motion with which, in conversation, he threw out his objections and retorts. As he stood, with the high collar of his great-coat raised to his ears, he might have seen from the reflection in the glass case before him that his appearance was a singular one. Yet it came upon him as a sudden jar when an English voice behind him exclaimed in very audible tones, "What a queer-looking mortal!"

The student had a large amount of petty vanity in his composition which manifested itself by an ostentatious and overdone disregard of all personal considerations. He straightened his lips

and looked rigidly at the roll of papyrus, while his heart filled with bitterness against the whole race of traveling Britons.

"Yes," said another voice, "he really is an extraordinary fellow."

"Do you know," said the first speaker, "one could almost believe that by the continual contemplation of mummies the chap has become half a mummy himself?"

"He has certainly an Egyptian cast of countenance," said the other.

John Vansittart Smith spun round upon his heel with the intention of shaming his countrymen by a corrosive remark or two. To his surprise and relief, the two young fellows who had been conversing had their shoulders turned toward him, and were gazing at one of the Louvre attendants who was polishing some brass-work at the other side of the room.

"Carter will be waiting for us at the Palais Royal," said one tourist to the other, glancing at his watch, and they clattered away, leaving the student to his labors.

"I wonder what these chatterers call an Egyptian cast of countenance," thought John Vansittart Smith, and he moved his position slightly in order to catch a glimpse of the man's face. He started as his eyes fell upon it. It was indeed the very face with which his studies had made him familiar. The regular statuesque features, broad brow, well-rounded chin, and dusky complexion were the exact counterpart of the innumerable statues, mummy cases, and pictures which adorned the walls of the apartment. The thing was beyond all coincidence. The man must be an Egyptian. The national angularity of the shoulders and narrowness of the hips were alone sufficient to identify him.

John Vansittart Smith shuffled toward the attendant with some intention of addressing him. He was not light of touch in conversation, and found it difficult to strike the happy means between the brusqueness of the superior and the geniality of the equal. As he came nearer, the man presented his side face to him, but kept his gaze still bent upon his work. Vansittart Smith, fixing his eyes upon the fellow's skin, was conscious of a sudden impression that there was something inhuman and preternatural about its appearance. Over the temple and cheek-bone it was as glazed and as shiny as varnished parchment. There was no suggestion of pores. One could not fancy a drop of moisture upon that arid surface. From brow to chin, however, it was cross-hatched by a million delicate wrinkles which shot and interlaced as though Nature in some Maori mood had tried how wild and intricate a pattern she could devise.

"Où est la collection de Memphis?" asked the student, with the awkward air of a man who is devising a question merely for the purpose of opening a conversation.

"C'est là," replied the man, brusquely, nodding his head at the other side of the room.

"Vous êtes un Egyptien, n'est-ce pas?" asked the Englishman.

The attendant looked up and turned his strange, dark eyes upon his questioner. They were vitreous, with a misty, dry shininess, such as Smith had never seen in a human head before. As he gazed into them he saw some

strong emotion gather in their depths, which rose and deepened until it broke into a look of something akin both to horror and to hatred.

"Non, monsieur; je suis Français." The man turned abruptly and bent low over his polishing. The student gazed at him for a moment in astonishment, and then turning to a chair in a retired corner behind one of the doors, he proceeded to make notes of his researches among the papyri. His thoughts, however, refused to return into their natural groove. They would run upon the enigmatical attendant with the sphinx-like face and the parchment skin.

"Where have I seen such eyes?" said Vansittart Smith to himself. "There is something saurian about them, something reptilian. There's the membrana nictitans of the snakes," he mused, bethinking himself of his zoölogical studies. "It gives a shiny effect. But there was something more here. There was a sense of power, of wisdom—so I read them—and of weariness, utter weariness, and ineffable despair. It may be all imagination, but I never had so strong an impression. By Jove, I must have another look at them!" He rose and paced round the Egyptian rooms, but the man who had excited his curiosity had disappeared.

The student sat down again in his quiet corner, and continued to work at his notes. He had gained the information which he required from the papyri; and it only remained to write it down while it was still fresh in his memory. For a time his pencil traveled rapidly over the paper, but soon the lines became less level, the words more blurred, and finally the pencil tinkled down upon the floor, and the head of the student dropped heavily forward upon his chest. Tired out by his journey, he slept so soundly in his lonely post behind the door that neither the clanking civil guard, nor the footsteps of sightseers, nor even the loud, hoarse bell which gives the signal for closing, were sufficient to arouse him.

Twilight deepened into darkness, the bustle from the Rue de Rivoli waxed and then waned, distant Notre Dame clanged out the hour of midnight, and still the dark and lonely figure sat silently in the shadow. It was not until close upon one in the morning that, with a sudden gasp and an intaking of the breath, Vansittart Smith returned to consciousness. For a moment it flashed upon him that he had dropped asleep in his study-chair at home. The moon was shining fitfully through the unshuttered window, however, and, as his eye ran along the lines of mummies and the endless array of polished cases, he remembered clearly where he was and how he came there. The student was not a nervous man. He possessed that love of a novel situation which is peculiar to his race. Stretching out his cramped limbs, he looked at his watch, and burst into a chuckle as he observed the hour. The episode would make an admirable anecdote to be introduced into his next paper as a relief to the graver and heavier speculations. He was a little cold, but wide awake and much refreshed. It was no wonder that the guardians had overlooked him, for the door threw its heavy black shadow right across him.

The complete silence was impressive. Neither outside nor inside was there a creak or a murmur. He was alone with the dead men of a dead civilization.

What though the outer city reeked of the garish nineteenth century? In all this chamber there was scarce an article, from the shriveled ear of wheat to the pigment box of the painter, which had not held its own against four thousand years. Here were the flotsam and jetsam washed up by the great ocean of time from that far-off empire. From stately Thebes, from lordly Luxor, from the great temples of Heliopolis, from a hundred rifled tombs, these relics had been brought. The student glanced round at the long-silent figures who flickered vaguely up through the gloom, at the busy toilers who were now so restful, and he fell into a reverent and thoughtful mood. An unwonted sense of his own youth and insignificance came over him. Leaning back in his chair, he gazed dreamily down the long vista of rooms, all silvery with the moonshine, which extend through the whole wing of the widespread building. His eyes fell upon the yellow glare of a distant lamp.

John Vansittart Smith sat up on his chair with his nerves all on edge. The light was advancing slowly toward him, pausing from time to time, and then coming jerkily onward. The bearer moved noiselessly. In the utter silence there was no suspicion of the pat of a footfall. An idea of robbers entered the Englishman's head. He snuggled up further into the corner. The light was two rooms off. Now it was in the next chamber, and still there was no sound. With something approaching to a thrill of fear, the student observed a face, floating in the air as it were, behind the flare of the lamp. The figure was wrapped in shadow, but the light fell full upon the strange, eager face. There was no mistaking the metallic, glistening eyes and the cadaverous skin. It was the attendant with whom he had conversed.

Vansittart Smith's first impulse was to come forward and address him. A few words of explanation would set the matter clear, and lead doubtless to his being conducted to some side door from which he might make his way to his hotel. As the man entered the chamber, however, there was something so stealthy in his movements, and so furtive in his expression, that the Englishman altered his intention. This was clearly no ordinary official walking the rounds. The fellow wore felt-soled slippers, stepped with a rising chest, and glanced quickly from left to right, while his hurried, gasping breathing thrilled the flame of his lamp. Vansittart Smith crouched silently back into the corner and watched him keenly, convinced that his errand was one of secret and probably sinister import.

There was no hesitation in the other's movements. He stepped lightly and swiftly across to one of the great cases, and, drawing a key from his pocket, he unlocked it. From the upper shelf he pulled down a mummy, which he bore away with him, and laid it with much care and solicitude upon the ground. By it he placed his lamp, and then squatting down beside it in Eastern fashion, he began with long, quivering fingers to undo the cere-cloths and bandages which girt it round. As the crackling rolls of linen peeled off one after the other, a strong aromatic odor filled the chamber, and fragments of scented wood and of spices spattered down upon the marble floor.

It was clear to John Vansittart Smith

that this mummy had never been unswathed before. The operation interested him keenly. He thrilled all over with curiosity, and his bird-like head protruded further and further from behind the door. When, however, the last roll had been removed from the four-thousand-year-old head, it was all that he could do to stifle an outcry of amazement. First, a cascade of long, black, glossy tresses poured over the workman's hands and arms. A second turn of the bandage revealed a low white forehead, with a pair of delicately arched eyebrows. A third uncovered a pair of bright, deeply fringed eyes, and a straight, well-cut nose, while a fourth and last showed a sweet, full, sensitive mouth, and a beautifully curved chin. The whole face was one of extraordinary loveliness, save for the one blemish that in the center of the forehead there was a single irregular, coffee-colored splotch. It was a triumph of the embalmer's art. Vansittart Smith's eyes grew larger and larger as he gazed upon it, and he chirruped in his throat with satisfaction.

Its effect upon the Egyptologist was as nothing, however, compared with that which it produced upon the strange attendant. He threw his hands up into the air, burst into a harsh clatter of words, and then, hurling himself down upon the ground beside the mummy, he threw his arms round her, and kissed her repeatedly upon the lips and brow. "Ma petite!" he groaned in French. "Ma pauvre petite!" His voice broke with emotion, and his innumerable wrinkles quivered and writhed, but the student observed in the lamp-light that his shining eyes were still as dry and tearless as two beads of steel. For some minutes he lay, with a twitching face, crooning and moaning over the beautiful head. Then he broke into a sudden smile, said some words in an unknown tongue, and sprung to his feet with the vigorous air of one who has braced himself for an effort.

In the center of the room there was a large circular case which contained, as the student had frequently remarked, a magnificent collection of early Egyptian rings and precious stones. To this the attendant strode, and, unlocking it, he threw it open. On the ledge at the side he placed his lamp, and beside it a small earthenware jar which he had drawn from his pocket. He then took a handful of rings from the case, and with a most serious and anxious face he proceeded to smear each in turn with some liquid substance from the earthen pot, holding them to the light as he did so. He was clearly disappointed with the first lot, for he threw them petulantly back into the case, and drew out some more. One of these, a massive ring with a large crystal set in it, he seized and eagerly tested with the contents of the jar. Instantly he uttered a cry of joy, and threw out his arms in a wild gesture which upset the pot and sent the liquid streaming across the floor to the very feet of the Englishman. The attendant drew a red handkerchief from his bosom, and, mopping up the mess, he followed it into the corner, where in a moment he found himself face to face with his observer.

"Excuse me," said John Vansittart Smith, with all imaginable politeness; "I have been unfortunate enough to fall asleep behind this door."

"And you have been watching me?"

the other asked in English, with a most venomous look on his corpse-like face.

The student was a man of veracity. "I confess," said he, "that I have noticed your movements, and that they have aroused my curiosity and interest in the highest degree."

The man drew a long, flamboyant-bladed knife from his bosom. "You have had a very narrow escape," he said; "had I seen you ten minutes ago, I should have driven this through your heart. As it is, if you touch me or interfere with me in any way you are a dead man."

"I have no wish to interfere with you," the student answered. "My presence here is entirely accidental. All I ask is that you will have the extreme kindness to show me out through some side door." He spoke with great suavity, for the man was still pressing the tip of his dagger against the palm of his left hand, as though to assure himself of its sharpness, while his face preserved its malignant expression.

"If I thought—" said he. "But no, perhaps it is as well. What is your name?"

The Englishman gave it.

"Vansittart Smith," the other repeated. "Are you the same Vansittart Smith who gave a paper in London upon El Kab? I saw a report of it. Your knowledge of the subject is contemptible."

"Sir!" cried the Egyptologist.

"Yet it is superior to that of many who make even greater pretensions. The whole keystone of our old life in Egypt was not the inscriptions or monuments of which you make so much but was our hermetic philosophy and mystic knowledge, of which you say little or nothing."

"Our old life!" repeated the scholar, wide-eyed; and then suddenly: "Good God, look at the mummy's face!"

The strange man turned and flashed his light upon the dead woman, uttering a long, doleful cry as he did so. The action of the air had already undone all the art of the embalmer. The skin had fallen away, the eyes had sunk inward, the discolored lips had writhed away from the yellow teeth, and the brown mark upon the forehead alone showed that it was indeed the same face which had shown such youth and beauty a few short minutes before.

The man flapped his hands together in grief and horror. Then mastering himself by a strong effort, he turned his hard eyes once more upon the Englishman.

"It does not matter," he said, in a shaking voice. "It does not really matter. I came here to-night with the fixed determination to do something. It is now done. All else is as nothing. I have found my quest. The old curse is broken. I can rejoin her. What matter about her inanimate shell so long as her spirit is awaiting me at the other side of the veil!"

"These are wild words," said Vansittart Smith. He was becoming more and more convinced that he had to do with a madman.

"Time presses, and I must go," continued the other. "The moment is at hand for which I have waited this weary time. But I must show you out first. Come with me."

Taking up the lamp, he turned from the disordered chamber, and led the student swiftly through the long series

of the Egyptian, Assyrian, and Persian apartments. At the end of the latter he pushed open a small door let into the wall, and descended a winding stone stair. The Englishman felt the cold fresh air of the night upon his brow. There was a door opposite him which appeared to communicate with the street. To the right of this another door stood ajar, throwing a spurt of yellow light across the passage. "Come in here!" said the attendant shortly.

Vansittart Smith hesitated. He had hoped that he had come to the end of his adventure. Yet his curiosity was strong within him. He could not leave the matter unsolved, so he followed his strange companion into the lighted chamber.

It was a small room, such as is devoted to a *concierge*. A wood fire sparkled in the grate. At one side stood a truckle bed, and at the other a coarse wooden chair, with a round table in the center, which bore the remains of a meal. As the visitor's eye glanced round he could not but remark with an ever-recurring thrill that all the small details of the room were of the most quaint design and antique workmanship. The candlesticks, the vases upon the chimney-piece, the fire-irons, the ornaments upon the walls, were all such as he had been wont to associate with the remote past. The gnarled, heavy-eyed man sat himself down upon the edge of the bed, and motioned his guest into the chair.

"There may be design in this," he said, still speaking excellent English. "It may be decreed that I should leave some account behind as a warning to all rash mortals who would set their wits up against workings of Nature. I leave it with you. Make such use as you will of it. I speak to you now with my feet upon the threshold of the other world.

"I am, as you surmised, an Egyptian—not one of the down-trodden race of slaves who now inhabit the Delta of the Nile, but a survivor of that fiercer and harder people who tamed the Hebrew, drove the Ethiopian back into the southern deserts, and built those mighty works which have been the envy and the wonder of all after generations. It was in the reign of Tuthmosis, sixteen hundred years before the birth of Christ, that I first saw the light. You shrink away from me. Wait, and you will see that I am more to be pitied than to be feared.

"My name was Sosra. My father had been the chief priest of Osiris in the great temple of Abaris, which stood in those days upon the Bubastic branch of the Nile. I was brought up in the temple and was trained in all those mystic arts which are spoken of in your own Bible. I was an apt pupil. Before I was sixteen I had learned all which the wisest priest could teach me. From that time on I studied Nature's secrets for myself, and shared my knowledge with no man.

"Of all the questions which attracted me there were none over which I labored so long as over those which concern themselves with the nature of life. I probed deeply into the vital principle. The aim of medicine had been to drive away disease when it appeared. It seemed to me that a method might be devised which should so fortify the body as to prevent weakness or death from ever taking hold of it. It is useless that I should recount

my researches. You would scarce comprehend them if I did. They were carried out partly upon animals, partly upon slaves, and partly on myself. Suffice it that their result was to furnish me with a substance which, when injected into the blood, would endow the body with strength to resist the effects of time, of violence, or of disease. It would not, indeed, confer immortality, but its potency would endure for many thousands of years. I used it upon a cat, and afterward drugged the creature with the most deadly poisons. That cat is alive in Lower Egypt at the present moment. There was nothing of mystery or magic in the matter. It was simply a chemical discovery, which may well be made again.

"Love of life runs high in the young. It seemed to me that I had broken away from all human care now that I had abolished pain and driven death to such a distance. With a light heart I poured the accursed stuff into my veins. Then I looked round for some one whom I could benefit. There was a young priest of Thoth, Parmes by name, who had won my good will by his earnest nature and his devotion to his studies. To him I whispered my secret, and at his request I injected him with my elixir. I should now, I reflected, never be without a companion of the same age as myself.

"After this grand discovery I relaxed my studies to some extent, but Parmes continued his with redoubled energy. Every day I could see him working with his flasks and his distiller in the Temple of Thoth, but he said little to me as to the result of his labors. For my own part, I used to walk through the city and look around me with exultation as I reflected that all this was destined to pass away, and that only I should remain. The people would bow to me as they passed me, for the fame of my knowledge had gone abroad.

"There was war at this time, and the great king had sent down his soldiers to the eastern boundary to drive away the Hyksos. A governor, too, was sent to Abaris, that he might hold it for the king. I had heard much of the beauty of the daughter of this governor, but one day as I walked out with Parmes we met her, borne upon the shoulders of her slaves. I was struck with love as with lightning. My heart went out from me. I could have thrown myself beneath the feet of her bearers. This was my woman. Life without her was impossible. I swore by the head of Horus that she should be mine. I swore it to the priest of Thoth. He turned away from me with a brow which was as black as midnight.

"There is no need to tell you of our wooing. She came to love me even as I loved her. I learned that Parmes had seen her before I did, and had shown her that he too loved her; but I could smile at his passion, for I knew that her heart was mine. The white plague had come upon the city, and many were stricken, but I laid my hands upon the sick and nursed them without fear or scathe. She marveled at my daring. Then I told her my secret, and begged her that she would let me use my art upon her.

" 'Your flower shall then be unwithered, Atma,' I said. 'Other things may pass away, but you and I, and our great love for each other, shall outlive the tomb of King Chefru.'

"But she was full of timid, maidenly

objections. 'Was it right?' she asked, 'was it not a thwarting of the will of the gods? If the great Osiris had wished that our years should be so long, would he not himself have brought it about?'

"With fond and loving words I overcame her doubts; and yet she hesitated. It was a great question, she said. She would think it over for this one night. In the morning I should know her resolution. Surely one night was not too much to ask. She wished to pray to Isis for help in her decision.

"With a sinking heart and a sad foreboding of evil, I left her with her tirewomen. In the morning, when the early sacrifice was over, I hurried to her house. A frightened slave met me upon the steps. Her mistress was ill, she said, very ill. In a frenzy I broke my way through the attendants, and rushed through hall and corridor to my Atma's chamber. She lay upon her couch, her head high upon the pillow, with a pallid face and a glazed eye. On her forehead there blazed a single angry purple patch. I knew that hell-mark of old. It was the scar of the white plague, the sign-manual of death.

"Why should I speak of that terrible time? For months I was mad, fevered, delirious, and yet I could not die. Never did an Arab thirst after the sweet wells as I longed after death. Could poison or steel have shortened the thread of my existence, I should soon have rejoined my love in the land with the narrow portal. I tried, but it was of no avail. The accursed influence was too strong upon me. One night as I lay upon my couch, weak and weary, Parmes, the priest of Thoth, came to my chamber. He stood in the circle of the lamp-light, and he looked down upon me with eyes which were bright with a mad joy.

"'Why did you let the maiden die?' he asked; 'why did you not strengthen her as you strengthened me?'

"'It was too late,' I answered. 'But I had forgotten. You also loved her. You are my fellow in misfortune. Is it not terrible to think of the centuries which must pass ere we look upon her again? Fools, fools, that we were to take death to be our enemy!'

"'You may say that,' he cried, with a wild laugh; 'the words come well from your lips. For me they have no meaning.'

"'What mean you?' I cried, raising myself upon my elbow. 'Surely, friend, this grief has turned your brain.' His face was aflame with joy, and he writhed and shook like one who hath a devil.

"'Do you know whither I go?' he asked.

"'Nay,' I answered, 'I cannot tell.'

"'I go to her,' said he. 'She lies embalmed in the further tomb by the double palm-tree beyond the city wall.'

"'Why do you go there?' I asked.

"'To die!' he shrieked, 'to die! I am not bound by earthen fetters.'

"'But the elixir is in your blood,' I cried.

"'I can defy it,' said he; 'I have found a stronger principle which will destroy it. It is working in my veins at this moment, and in an hour I shall be a dead man. I shall join her, and you shall remain behind.'

"As I looked upon him I could see that he spoke words of truth. The light in his eyes told me that he was indeed beyond the power of the elixir.

"'You will teach me!' I cried.

"'Never!' he answered.

"'I implore you, by the wisdom of Thoth, by the majesty of Anubis!'

"'It is useless,' he said, coldly.

"'Then I will find it out,' I cried.

"'You cannot,' he answered; 'it came to me by chance. There is one ingredient which you can never get. Save that which is in the ring of Thoth, none will ever more be made.'

"'In the ring of Thoth!' I repeated; 'where, then, is the ring of Thoth?'

"'That also you shall never know,' he answered. 'You won her love. Who has won in the end? I leave you to your sordid earth life. My chains are broken. I must go!' He turned upon his heel and fled from the chamber. In the morning came the news that the priest of Thoth was dead.

"My days after that were spent in study. I must find this subtle poison which was strong enough to undo the elixir. From early dawn to midnight I bent over the test-tube and the furnace. Above all, I collected the papyri and the chemical flasks of the priest of Thoth. Alas! they taught me little. Here and there some hint or stray expression would raise hope in my bosom, but no good ever came of it. Still, month after month, I struggled on. When my heart grew faint I would make my way to the tomb by the palm-trees. There, standing by the dead casket from which the jewel had been rifled, I would feel her sweet presence, and would whisper to her that I would rejoin her if mortal wit could solve the riddle.

"Parmes had said that his discovery was connected with the ring of Thoth. I had some remembrance of the trinket. It was a large and weighty circlet, made, not of gold, but of a rarer and heavier metal brought from the mines of Mount Harbal. Platinum, you call it. The ring had, I remember, a hollow crystal set in it, in which some few drops of liquid might be stored. Now, the secret of Parmes could not have to do with the metal alone, for there were many rings of that metal in the Temple. Was it not more likely that he had stored his precious poison within the cavity of the crystal? I had scarce come to this conclusion before, in hunting through his papers, I came upon one which told me that it was indeed so, and that there was still some of the liquid unused.

"But how to find the ring? It was not upon him when he was stripped for the embalmer. Of that I made sure. Neither was it among his private effects. In vain I searched every room that he had entered, every box, and vase, and chattel that he had owned. I sifted the very sand of the desert in the places where he had been wont to walk; but, do what I would, I could come upon no traces of the ring of Thoth. Yet it may be that my labors would have overcome all obstacles had it not been for a new and unlooked-for misfortune.

"A great war had been waged against the Hyksos, and the captains of the great king had been cut off in the desert, with all their bowmen and horsemen. The shepherd tribes were upon us like the locusts in a dry year. From the wilderness of Shur to the great bitter lake there was blood by day and fire by night. Abaris was the bulwark of Egypt, but we could not keep the

savages back. The city fell. The governor and the soldiers were put to the sword, and I, with many more, was led away into captivity.

"For years and years I tended cattle in the great plains by the Euphrates. My master died, and his son grew old, but I was still as far from death as ever. At last I escaped upon a swift camel, and made my way back to Egypt. The Hyksos had settled in the land which they had conquered, and their own king ruled over the country. Abaris had been torn down, the city had been burned, and of the great temple there was nothing left save an unsightly mound. Everywhere the tombs had been rifled and the monuments destroyed. Of my Atma's grave no sign was left. It was buried in the sands of the desert, and the palm-trees which marked the spot had long disappeared. The papers of Parmes and the remains of the Temple of Thoth were either destroyed or scattered far and wide over the deserts of Syria. All search after them was vain.

"From that time I gave up all hope of ever finding the ring or discovering the subtle drug. I set myself to live as patiently as might be until the effect of the elixir should wear away. How can you understand how terrible a thing time is, you who have experienced only the narrow course which lies between the cradle and the grave! I know it to my cost, I who have floated down the whole stream of history. I was old when Illium fell. I was very old when Herodotus came to Memphis. I was bowed down with years when the new Gospel came upon earth. Yet you see me much as other men are, with the cursed elixir still sweetening my blood, and guarding me against that which I would court. Now at last, at last, I have come to the end of it!

"I have traveled in all lands and I have dwelt with all nations. Every tongue is the same to me. I learned them all to help pass the weary time. I need not tell you how slowly they drifted by, the long dawn of modern civilization, the dreary middle years, the dark times of barbarism. They are all behind me now. I have never looked with the eyes of love upon another woman. Atma knows that I have been constant to her.

"It was my custom to read all that the scholars had to say upon ancient Egypt. I have been in many positions, sometimes affluent, sometimes poor, but I have always found enough to enable me to buy the journals which deal with such matters. Some nine months ago I was in San Francisco, when I read an account of some discoveries made in the neighborhood of Abaris. My heart leaped into my mouth as I read it. It said that the excavator had busied himself in exploring some tombs recently unearthed. In one there had been found an unopened mummy with an inscription upon the outer case setting forth that it contained the body of the daughter of the governor of the city in the days of Tuthmosis. It added that on removing the outer case there had been exposed a large platinum ring set with a crystal, which had been laid upon the breast of the embalmed woman. This, then, was where Parmes had hidden the ring of Thoth. He might well say that it was safe, for no Egyptian would ever stain his soul by

moving even the outer case of a buried friend.

"That very night I set off from San Francisco, and in a few weeks I found myself once more at Abaris, if a few sand-heaps and crumbling walls may retain the name of the great city. I hurried to the Frenchmen who were digging there and asked them for the ring. They replied that both the ring and the mummy had been sent to the Boulak Museum at Cairo. To Boulak I went, but only to be told that Mariette Bey had claimed them and had shipped them to the Louvre. I followed them, and there at last, in the Egyptian chamber, I came, after close upon four thousand years, upon the remains of my Atma, and upon the ring for which I had sought so long.

"But how was I to lay hands upon them? How was I to have them for my very own? It chanced that the office of attendant was vacant. I went to the director. I convinced him that I knew much about Egypt. In my eagerness I said too much. He remarked that a professor's chair would suit me better than a seat in the *conciergerie*. I knew more, he said, than he did. It was only by blundering and letting him think that he had overestimated my knowledge, that I prevailed upon him to let me move the few effects which I have retained into this chamber. It is my first and my last night here.

"Such is my story, Mr. Vansittart Smith. I need not say more to a man of your perception. By a strange chance you have this night looked upon the face of the woman whom I loved in those far-off days. There were many rings with crystals in the case, and I had to test for the platinum to be sure of the one which I wanted. A glance at the crystal has shown me that the liquid is indeed within it, and that I shall at last be able to shake off that accursed health which has been worse to me than the foulest disease. I have nothing more to say to you. I have unburdened myself. You may tell my story or you may withhold it at your pleasure. The choice rests with you. I owe you some amends, for you have had a narrow escape of your life this night. I was a desperate man, and not to be balked in my purpose. Had I seen you before the thing was done, I might have put it beyond your power to oppose me or raise an alarm. This is the door. It leads into the Rue de Rivoli. Good night!"

The Englishman glanced back. For a moment the lean figure of Sosra the Egyptian stood framed in the narrow doorway. The next the door had slammed, and the heavy rasping of a bolt broke on the silent night.

It was on the second day after his return to London that Mr. John Vansittart Smith saw the following concise narrative in the Paris correspondence of the *Times*:

"*Curious Occurrence in the Louvre.*—Yesterday morning a strange discovery was made in the principal Egyptian chamber. The *ouvriers* who are employed to clean out the rooms in the morning found one of the attendants lying dead upon the floor with his arms round one of the mummies. So close was his embrace that it was only with the utmost difficulty that they were separated. One of the cases containing valuable rings had been opened and

rifled. The authorities are of opinion that the man was bearing away the mummy with some idea of selling it to a private collector, but that he was struck down in the very act by long-standing disease of the heart. It is said that he was a man of uncertain age and eccentric habits, without any living relations to mourn over his dramatic and untimely end."

Count Mortier, Madman

November 11, 1846.

YESTERDAY Chancellor Pasquier comes to the house of Mme. de Boignes, and finds her in great agitation, holding a letter in her hand. "What is the matter, madame?" "This letter which I have received. Read it." The chancellor took the letter; it was signed "Mortier," and said, in effect, "Madame, when you read this letter my two children and myself will no longer be alive."

It was Count Mortier, a Peer of France, and formerly an ambassador, but where I cannot remember, who wrote. M. Pasquier was much concerned. M. Mortier was known as a confirmed hypochondriac. Four years ago, at Bruges, he ran after his wife with a razor in his hand, with the intention of killing her. A month ago he made a similar attempt, which led to a separation, by the terms of which M. Mortier retained the custody of the children, a little boy of seven years of age and a little girl of five. His hypochondria was caused, it appears, by jealousy, and developed into uncontrollable passion.

The chancellor sends for his carriage, and does not take a chair. "Where does M. Mortier live?" "In the Rue Neuve Saint-Augustin, in the Hôtel Chatham," said Mme. de Boignes.

M. Pasquier arrives at the Hôtel Chatham; he finds the staircase crowded, a commissary of police, a locksmith with his bunch of keys, the door barricaded. The alarm had been given. They were going to break open the door.

"I forbid you," said the chancellor. "You would exasperate him, and if the mischief were not yet done he would do it."

For some time, however, M. Mortier had not answered. There was nothing but a profound silence behind the door, —a terrible silence, for it seemed that if the children were still living they would be crying. "It seemed," said the chancellor, when he told me this today, "as if it was the door of a tomb."

The chancellor called out his name: "Count Mortier, it is I, M. Pasquier, the chancellor, your colleague. You know my voice, do you not?"

To this a voice replied, "Yes."

It was the voice of M. Mortier.

The on-lookers breathed again.

"Well," continued M. Pasquier, "you know me; open the door."

"No," replied the same voice. Then it obstinately refused to speak again. All was silent once more.

This happened several times. He replied, the dialogue continued, he refused to open, then he remained silent.

Those outside trembled for fear that in these brief intervals of silence he might do the dreadful deed.

In the meantime the prefect of police had arrived.

"It is I, your colleague, Delessert, and your old friend." (They were school-fellows, I think.)

This parleying lasts for more than an hour. At length he consents to open the door provided they give him their word they will not enter. The word is given; he half opens the door; they go in.

He was in the anteroom, with an open razor in his hand; behind him was the inner door of his rooms, locked and with the key removed. He appeared frenzied.

"If any one approaches me," he said, "there will be an end of him and me. I will remain alone with Delessert and speak to him; I consent to that."

A risky conversation this, with a furious man armed with a razor. M. Delessert, who behaved bravely, asked every one else to withdraw, remained alone with M. Mortier, and after a refusal, which lasted for a space of twenty minutes, persuaded him to put down the razor.

Once disarmed, he was secured.

But were the children dead or living? It was terrible to reflect upon. To all questions on the subject he replied, "It is nothing to do with you."

The inner door is broken open, and what is found at the farther end of the rooms? The two children, crouching under the furniture.

This is what had happened.

In the morning M. Mortier said to his children, "I am very unhappy. You love me, and I love you. I am going to die. Will you die with me?"

The little boy said, resolutely, "No, papa."

As for the little girl, she hesitated. In order to persuade her the father passed the back of the razor gently around her neck, and said to her, "There, my dear, it will not hurt you any more than that."

"Well, then, papa," said the child, "I do not mind dying."

The father goes out, probably to fetch a second razor. Directly he goes out, the little boy rushes to the key, lays hold of it, shuts the door, and locks it twice on the inside.

Then he takes his sister to the furthermost end of the rooms and gets under the furniture with her.

The doctors declared that Count Mortier was a melancholy and dangerous madman. He was taken to a madhouse.

He had a mania, in fact, for razors. When he was seized he was searched; besides that which he had in his hand, one was found in each of his pockets.

On the same day the news arrived in Paris that my colleague, Count Bresson, had cut his throat at Naples, where he had recently been appointed Ambassador.

This was a grief to us all, and a great surprise. From a mere worldly point of view, Count Bresson wanted nothing. He was a Peer of France, an ambassador, a Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour. His son had lately been created a Duke in Spain. As an ambassador he had a salary of two hundred thousand francs a year. He was an earnest, kindly, gentle, intelligent, sensible man, very rational in

everything, of high stature, with broad shoulders, a good square face, and at fifty-five years of age looked only forty; he had wealth, greatness, dignity, intelligence, health, and was fortunate in private as in public life. He killed himself.

Nourrit also went to Naples and killed himself.

Is it the climate? Is it the marvellous sky?

Spleen is engendered just as much under a blue sky as under a gloomy sky,—more so, perhaps.

As the life of even the most prosperous man is always in reality more sad than gay, a gloomy sky is in harmony with ourselves. A brilliant and joyous sky mocks us. Nature in its sad aspects resembles us and consoles us; Nature, when radiant, impassive, serene, magnificent, transplendent, young while we grow old, smiling when we are sighing, superb, inaccessible, eternal, contented, calm in its joyousness, has in it something oppressive.

By dint of contemplating the sky,—ruthless, unrelenting, indifferent, and sublime,—one takes a razor and makes an end of it.

Possession of the Island

In the Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ:

BECAUSE, O most Christian, and very high, very excellent, and puissant Princes, King and Queen of the Spains and of the islands of the Sea, our Lords, in this present year of 1492, after your Highnesses had given an end to the war with the Moors who reigned in Europe, and had finished it in the very great city of Granada, where in this present year, on the second day of this month of January, by force of arms, I saw the royal banners of your Highnesses placed on the towers of Alhambra, which is the fortress of that city, and I saw the Moorish King come forth from the gates of the city and kiss the royal hands of your Highnesses, and of the Prince my Lord, and presently in that same month, acting on the information that I had given to your Highnesses touching the lands of India, and respecting a Prince who is called *Gran Can,* which means in our language King of Kings, how he and his ancestors had sent to Rome many times to ask for learned men of our holy faith to teach him, and how the Holy Father had never complied, insomuch that many people believing in idolatries were lost by receiving doctrine of persition: YOUR HIGHNESSES, as Catholic Christians and Princes who love the holy Christian faith, and the propagation of it, and who are enemies to the sect of Mahoma and to all idolatries and heresies, resolved to send me, Cristobal Colon, to the said parts of India to see the said princes, and the cities and lands, and their disposition, with a view that they might be converted to our holy faith; and ordered that I should not go by land to the eastward, as had been customary, but that I should go by way of the west, whither up to this day, we do not know for certain that any one has gone.

Thus, after having turned out all the Jews from all your kingdoms and lord-

ships, in the same month of January, your Highnesses gave orders to me that with a sufficient fleet I should go to the said parts of India, and for this they made great concessions to me, and ennobled me, so that henceforward I should be called Don, and should be Chief Admiral of the Ocean Sea, perpetual Viceroy and Governor of all the islands and continents that I should discover and gain, and that I might hereafter discover and gain in the Ocean Sea, and that my eldest son should succeed, and so on from generation to generation forever.

I left the city of Granada on the 12th day of May, in the same year of 1492, being Saturday, and came to the town of Palos, which is a seaport; where I equipped three vessels well suited for such service; and departed from that port, well supplied with provisions and with many sailors, on the 3d day of August of the same year, being Friday, half an hour before sunrise, taking the route to the islands of Canaria, belonging to your Highnesses, which are in the said Ocean Sea, that I might thence take my departure for navigating until I should arrive at the Indies, and give the letters of your Highnesses to those princes, so as to comply with my orders. As part of my duty I thought it well to write an account of all the voyage very punctually, noting from day to day all that I should do and see, and that should happen, as will be seen further on. Also, Lords Princes, I resolved to describe each night what passed in the day, and to note each day how I navigated at night. I propose to construct a new chart for navigating, on which I shall delineate all the sea and lands of the Ocean in their proper positions under their bearings; and further, I propose to prepare a book, and to put down all as it were in a picture, by latitude from the equator, and western longitude. Above all, I shall have accomplished much, for I shall forget sleep, and shall work at the business of navigation, that so the service may be performed; all which will entail great labour. . . .

THURSDAY, 11TH OF OCTOBER

The course was W. S. W., and there was more sea than there had been during the whole of the voyage. They saw sand-pipers, and a green reed near the ship. Those of the caravel *Pinta* saw a cane and a pole, and they took up another small pole which appeared to have been worked with iron; also another bit of cane, a land-plant, and a small board. The crew of the caravel *Niña* also saw signs of land, and a small branch covered with berries. Every one breathed afresh and rejoiced at these signs. The run until sunset was 27 leagues.

After sunset the Admiral returned to the original west course, and they went at the rate of 12 miles an hour. Up to 2 hours after midnight, they had gone equal to 22½ leagues. As the *Pinta* was a better sailer, and went ahead of the Admiral, she found the land, made the signals ordered. The land was first seen by a sailor named Rodrigo de Triana. But the Admiral, at ten the previous night, being on the castle of the poop, saw a light, though it was so uncertain that he could not affirm it was land.

He called Pero Gutierrez, a gentleman of the King's bedchamber, and said that there seemed to be a light, and

he should look at it. He did so, and saw it. The Admiral said the same to Rodrigo Sanchez of Segovia, whom the King and Queen had sent with the fleet as inspector, but he could see nothing, because he was not in a place whence anything could be seen. After the Admiral had spoken he saw the light once or twice, and it was like a wax candle rising and falling. It seemed to few to be an indication of land; but the Admiral made certain that land was close.

When they said the *Salve,* which all the sailors were accustomed to sing in their way, the Admiral asked and admonished the men to keep a good lookout on the forecastle, and to watch well for land; and to him who should first cry out that he saw land, he would give a silk doublet, besides the other rewards promised by the Sovereigns, which were 10,000 maravedis to him who should first see it.

At two hours after midnight the land was sighted at a distance of two leagues. They shortened sail, and lay by under the main-sail without the bonnets. The vessels were hove to, waiting for daylight; and so on Friday they arrived at a small island of the Lucayos, called in the language of the Indians, *Guanahani.* Presently they saw naked people.

The Admiral went on shore in the armed boat, and Martin Alonso Pinzon, and Vicente Yañez, his brother, who was captain of the *Niña.* The Admiral took the royal standard, and the captains went with two banners of the green cross, which the Admiral took in all the ships as a sign, with an F and a Y and a crown over each letter, one on one side of the cross and the other on the other. Having landed, they saw trees very green, and much water, and fruits of diverse kinds. The Admiral called to the two captains, and to the others who leaped on shore, and to Rodrigo Escovedo, secretary of the whole fleet, and to Rodrigo Sanchez of Segovia, and said that they should bear faithful testimony that he, in presence of all, had taken, as he now took, possession of the said island for the King and for the Queen, his Lords making the declarations that are required, as is more largely set forth in the testimonies which were then made in writing.

Presently many inhabitants of the island assembled. What follows is in the actual words of the Admiral in his book of the first navigation and discovery of the Indies.

That we might form great friendship, for I knew that they were a people who could be more easily freed and converted to our holy faith by love than by force, I gave to some of them red caps, and glass beads to put round their necks, and many other things of little value, which gave them great pleasure, and made them so much our friends that it was a marvel to see. They afterward came to the ship's boats where we were swimming and bringing us parrots, cotton threads in skeins, darts, and many other things; and we exchanged them for other things that we gave them, such as glass beads and small bells. In fine, they took all, and gave what they had with good will.

It appeared to me to be a race of people very poor in everything. They go as naked as when their mothers bore them, and so do the women, although I did not see more than one young girl. All I saw were youths, none more than

thirty years of age. They were very well made, with very handsome bodies, and very good countenances. Their hair is short and coarse, almost like the hairs of a horse's tail. They wear the hairs brought down to the eyebrows, except a few locks behind, which they wear long and never cut. They paint themselves black, and they are the colour of the Canarians, neither black nor white. Some paint themselves white, others red, and others of what colour they find. Some paint their faces, others the whole body, some only round the eyes, others only on the nose. They neither carry nor know anything of arms, for I showed them swords, and they took them by the blade and cut themselves through ignorance. They have no iron, their darts being wands without iron, some of them having a fish's tooth at the end, and others being pointed in various ways. They are all of fair stature and size, with good faces, and well made. I saw some with marks of wounds on their bodies, and I made signs to ask what it was, and they gave me to understand that people from other adjacent islands came with the intention of seizing them, and that they defended themselves. I believed, and still believe, that they came here from the main land to take them prisoners. They should be good servants and intelligent, for I observed that they quickly took in what was said to them, and I believe that they would easily be made Christians, as it appeared to me that they had no religion. I, our Lord being pleased, will take hence, at the time of my departure, six natives for your Highnesses, that they may learn to speak. I saw no beast of any kind except parrots, on this island.

As soon as dawn broke many of these people came to the beach, all youths, as I have said, and all of good stature, a very handsome people. Their hair is not curly, but loose and coarse, like horse hair. In all the forehead is broad, more so than in any other people I have hitherto seen. Their eyes are very beautiful and not small, and themselves far from black, but the colour of the Canarians. Nor should anything else be expected, as this island is in a line east and west from the island of Hierro in the Canaries. Their legs are very straight, all in one line, and no belly, but very well formed. They came to the ship in small canoes, made out of the trunk of a tree like a long boat, and all of one piece, and wonderfully worked, considering the country. They are large, some of them holding forty to fifty men, others smaller, and some only large enough to hold one man. They are propelled with a paddle like a baker's shovel, and go at a marvelous rate. If the canoe capsizes they all promptly begin to swim, and to bale it out with calabashes that they take with them.

They brought skeins of cotton thread, parrots, darts, and other small things which it would be tedious to recount, and they give all in exchange for anything that may be given to them. I was attentive, and took trouble to ascertain if there was gold. I saw that some of them had a small piece fastened in a hole they have in the nose, and by signs I was able to make out that to the south, or going from the island to the south, there was a king who had great cups full, and who possessed a great quantity. I tried to get them to go there. but afterward I saw

that they had no inclination. I resolved to wait until to-morrow afternoon and then to depart, shaping a course to the S. W. . . .

This island is rather large and very flat, with bright green trees, much water, and a very large lake in the center, without any mountain, and the whole land so green that it is a pleasure to look on it. The people are very docile, and for the longing to possess our things, and not having anything to give in return, they take what they can get, and presently swim away. Still, they give away all they have got, for whatever may be given to them, down to broken bits of crockery and glass. I saw one give sixteen skeins of cotton for three *ceotis* of Portugal, equal to one *blanca* of Spain, the skeins being as much as an *raroba* of cotton thread. I shall keep it, and shall allow no one to take it, preserving it all for your Highnesses, for it may be obtained in abundance. It is grown in this island, though the short time did not admit of my ascertaining this for a certainty. Here also is found the gold they wear fastened in their noses. But, in order not to lose time, I intend to go and see if I can find the island of Cipango. Now, as it is night, all the natives have gone on shore with their canoes.

Owl Creek Bridge

CHAPTER I

DEATH

A MAN stood upon a railroad bridge in Northern Alabama looking down into the swift waters twenty feet below. The man's hands were behind his back, the wrists bound with a cord. A rope loosely encircled his neck. It was attached to a stout cross-timber above his head, and the slack fell to the level of his knees. Some loose boards laid upon the sleepers supporting the metals of the railway supplied a footing for him and his executioners—two private soldiers of the Federal army, directed by a sergeant, who in civil life may have been a deputy sheriff. At a short remove upon the same temporary platform was an officer in the uniform of his rank, armed. He was a captain. A sentinel at each end of the bridge stood with his rifle in the position known as "support," that is to say, vertical in front of the left shoulder, the hammer resting on the forearm thrown straight across the chest—a formal and unnatural position, enforcing an erect carriage of the body. It did not appear to be the duty of these two men to know what was occurring at the centre of the bridge; they merely blockaded the two ends of the foot-plank which traversed it.

Beyond one of the sentinels nobody was in sight; the railroad ran straight away into a forest for a hundred yards, then, curving, was lost to view. Doubtless there was an outpost further along. The other bank of the stream was open ground—a gentle acclivity crowned with

a stockade of vertical tree-trunks, loopholed for rifles, with a single embrasure through which protruded the muzzle of a brass cannon commanding the bridge. Midway up the slope between the bridge and fort were the spectators—a single company of infantry in line, at "parade rest," the butts of the rifles on the ground, the barrel inclining slightly backward against the right shoulder, the hands crossed upon the stock. A lieutenant stood at the right of the line, the point of his sword upon the ground, his left hand resting upon his right. Excepting the group of four at the center of the bridge not a man moved. The company faced the bridge, staring stonily, motionless. The sentinels, facing the banks of the stream, might have been statues to adorn the bridge. The captain stood with folded arms, silent, observing the work of his subordinates, but making no sign. Death is a dignitary who, when he comes announced, is to be received with formal manifestations of respect, even by those most familiar with him. In the code of military etiquette silence and fixity are forms of deference.

The man who was engaged in being hanged was apparently about thirty-five years of age. He was a civilian, if one might judge from his dress, which was that of a planter. His features were good—a straight nose, firm mouth, broad forehead, from which his long, dark hair was combed straight back, falling behind his ears to the collar of his well-fitting frock coat. He wore a mustache and pointed beard, but no whiskers; his eyes were large and dark gray, and had a kindly expression which one would hardly have expected in one whose neck was in the hemp. Evidently this was no vulgar assassin. The liberal military code makes provisions for hanging many kinds of people, and gentlemen are not excluded.

The preparations being complete, the two private soldiers stepped aside, and each drew away the plank upon which he had been standing. The sergeant turned to the captain, saluted, and placed himself immediately behind that officer, who in turn moved apart one pace. These movements left the condemned man and the sergeant standing on the two ends of the same plank, which spanned three of the cross-ties of the bridge. The end upon which the civilian stood almost, but not quite, reached a fourth. This plank had been held in place by the weight of the captain; it was now held by that of the sergeant. At a signal from the former the latter would step aside, the plank would tilt, and the condemned man go down between two ties. The arrangement commended itself to his judgment as simple and effective. His face had not been covered nor his eyes bandaged. He looked a moment at his "unsteadfast footing," then let his gaze wander to the swirling water of the stream racing madly beneath his feet. A piece of dancing driftwood caught his attention, and his eyes followed it down the current. How slowly it appeared to move! What a sluggish stream!

He closed his eyes in order to fix his last thoughts upon his wife and children. The water, touched to gold by the early sun, the brooding mists under the banks at some distance down the stream, the fort, the soldiers, the piece of drift—all had distracted him. And now he became conscious of a new disturbance. Striking through the thought of his dear

ones was a sound he could neither ignore nor understand, a sharp, distinct, metallic percussion like the stroke of a blacksmith's hammer upon the anvil; it had the same ringing quality. He wondered what it was, and whether immeasurably distant or near by—it seemed both. Its recurrence was regular, but as slow as the tolling of a death-knell. He awaited each stroke with impatience and—he knew not why—apprehension. The intervals of silence grew progressively longer; the delays maddening. With their greater infrequency the sounds increased in strength and sharpness. They hurt his ear like the thrust of a knife; he feared he would shriek. What he heard was the ticking of his watch.

He unclosed his eyes and saw again the water below him. "If I could free my hands," he thought, "I might throw off the noose and spring into the stream. By diving, I could evade the bullets, and, swimming vigorously reach the bank, take to the woods, and get away home. My home, thank God, is as yet outside their lines; my wife and little ones are still beyond the invader's farthest advance."

As these thoughts, which have here to be set down in words, were flashed into the doomed man's brain rather than evolved from it, the captain nodded to the sergeant. The sergeant stepped aside.

CHAPTER II

DISCLOSURE

PEYTON FARQUHAR was a well-to-do planter, of an old and highly respected Alabama family. Being a slave-owner, and, like other slave-owners, a politician, he was naturally an original secessionist and ardently devoted to the Southern cause. Circumstances of an imperious nature which it is unnecessary to relate here had prevented him from taking service with the gallant army which had fought the disastrous campaigns ending with the fall of Corinth, and he chafed under the inglorious restraint, longing for the release of his energies, the larger life of the soldier, the opportunity for distinction. That opportunity, he felt, would come, as it comes to all in wartime. Meanwhile he did what he could. No service was too humble for him to perform in aid of the South, no adventure too perilous for him to undertake if consistent with the character of a civilian who was at heart a soldier, and who in good faith and without too much qualification assented to at least a part of the frankly villainous dictum that all is fair in love and war.

One evening while Farquhar and his wife were sitting on a rustic bench near the entrance to his grounds, a gray-clad soldier rode up to the gate and asked for a drink of water. Mrs. Farquhar was only too happy to serve him with her own white hands. While she was gone to fetch the water, her husband approached the dusty horseman and inquired eagerly for news from the front.

"The Yanks are repairing the railroads," said the man, "and are getting ready for another advance. They have reached the Owl Creek Bridge, put it in order, and built a stockade on the other bank. The commandant has issued an order, which is posted everywhere, declaring that any civilian caught interfering with the railroad, its bridges, tunnels, or trains, will be summarily hanged. I saw the order."

"How far is it to the Owl Creek Bridge?" Farquhar asked.

"About thirty miles."

"Is there no force on this side the creek?"

"Only a picket post half a mile out, on the railroad, and a single sentinel at this end of the bridge."

"Suppose a man—a civilian and student of hanging—should elude the picket post and perhaps get the better of the sentinel," said Farquhar, smiling, "what could he accomplish?"

The soldier reflected. "I was there a month ago," he replied. "I observed that the flood of last winter had lodged a great quantity of driftwood against the wooden pier at this end of the bridge. It is now dry, and would burn like tow."

The lady had now brought the water, which the soldier drank. He thanked her ceremoniously, bowed to her husband, and rode away. An hour later, after nightfall, he repassed the plantation, going northward in the direction from which he had come. He was a Federal scout.

CHAPTER III

DARKNESS

As Peyton Farquhar fell straight downward through the bridge, he lost consciousness and was as one already dead. From this state he was awakened —ages later, it seemed to him—by the pain of a sharp pressure upon his throat, followed by a sense of suffocation. Keen, poignant agonies seemed to shoot from his neck downward through every fiber of his body and limbs. These pains seemed to flash along well-defined lines of ramification, and to beat with an inconceivably rapid periodicity. They seemed like streaks of pulsating fire, heating him to an intolerable temperature. As to his head, he was conscious of nothing but a feeling of fulness—of congestion These sensations were unaccompanied by thought. The intellectual part of his nature was already effaced; he had power only to feel, and feeling was torment. He was conscious of motion. Encompassed in a luminous cloud, of which he was now merely the fiery heart, without material substance, he swung through unthinkable arcs of oscillation, like a vast pendulum. Then all at once, with terrible suddenness, the light about him shot upward with the noise of a loud splash; a frightful roaring was in his ears, and all was cold and dark. The power of thought was restored; he knew that the rope had broken and he had fallen into the stream. There was no additional strangulation; the noose about his neck was already suffocating him, and kept the water from his lungs. To die hanging at the bottom of a river—the idea seemed to him ludicrous. He opened his eyes in the blackness and saw above him a gleam of light; but how distant, how inaccessible! He was still sinking, for the light became fainter and fainter until it was a mere glimmer. Then it began to brighten, and he knew that he was rising toward the surface—knew it with reluctance, for he was now very c o m f o r t a b l e. "To be hanged and drowned," he thought, "that is not so bad; but I do not wish to be shot. No; I will not be shot; that is not fair."

He was not conscious of an effort, but a sharp pain in his wrists apprized him that he was trying to free his hands. He gave the struggle his attention, as

an idler might observe the feat of a juggler, without interest in the outcome. What a splendid effort—what magnificent, what superhuman strength! Ah, that was a fine endeavour! Bravo! The cord fell away; his arms parted and floated upward, the hands dimly seen on each side in the growing light. He watched them with new interest as first one and then the other pounced upon the noose at his neck. They tore it away and thrust it fiercely aside, its undulations resembling those of a water-snake. "Put it back! put it back!" He thought he shouted these words to his hands, for the undoing of the noose had been succeeded by the direst pang which he had yet experienced. His neck ached horribly; his brain was on fire; his heart, which had been fluttering faintly, gave a great leap, trying to force itself out of his mouth. His whole body was racked and wrenched with an insupportable anguish! But his disobedient hands gave no heed to the command. They beat the water vigorously with quick, downward strokes, forcing him to the surface. He felt his head emerge; his eyes were blinded by the sunlight; his chest expanded convulsively, and with a supreme and crowning agony his lungs engulfed a great draught of air, which instantly he expelled in a shriek!

He was now in full possession of his physical senses. They were, indeed, preternaturally keen and alert. Something in the awful disturbance of his organic system had so exalted and refined them that they made record of things never before perceived. He felt the ripples upon his face and heard their separate sounds as they struck. He looked at the forest on the bank of the stream, saw the individual trees, the leaves and the veining of each leaf—saw the very insects upon them, the locusts, the brilliant-bodied flies, the gray spiders stretching their webs from twig to twig. He noted the prismatic colors in all the dewdrops upon a million blades of grass. The humming of the gnats that danced above the eddies of the stream, the beating of the dragon-flies' wings, the strokes of the water-spiders' legs, like oars which have lifted their boat—all these made audible music. A fish slid along beneath his eyes, and he heard the rush of its body parting the water.

He had come to the surface facing down the stream; in a moment the visible world seemed to wheel slowly round, himself the pivotal point, and he saw the bridge, the fort, the soldiers on the bridge, the captain, the sergeant, the two privates, his executioners. They were in silhouette against the blue sky. They shouted and gesticulated, pointing at him; the captain had drawn his pistol, but did not fire; the others were unarmed. Their movements were grotesque and horrible, their forms gigantic.

Suddenly he heard a sharp report, and something struck the water smartly within a few inches of his head, spattering his face with spray. He heard a second report, and saw one of the sentinels with his rifle at his shoulder, a light cloud of blue smoke rising from the muzzle. The man in the water saw the eye of the man on the bridge gazing into his own through the sights of the rifle. He observed that it was a gray eye, and remembered having read that gray eyes were keenest, and that all

famous marksmen had them. Nevertheless, this one had missed.

A counter-swirl had caught Farquhar and turned him half around; he was again looking into the forest on the bank opposite the fort. The sound of a clear, high voice in a monotonous singsong now rang out behind him and came across the water with a distinctness that pierced and subdued all other sounds, even the beating of the ripples in his ears. Although no soldier, he had frequented camps enough to know the dread significance of that deliberate, drawling, aspirated chant; the lieutenant on shore was taking a part in the morning's work. How coldly and pitilessly—with what an even, calm intonation, presaging and enforcing tranquillity in the men—with what accurately measured intervals fell those cruel words: "Attention, company. Shoulder arms. Ready. Aim. Fire!"

Farquhar dived—dived as deeply as he could. The water roared in his ears like the voice of Niagara, yet he heard the dulled thunder of the volley, and rising again toward the surface, met shining bits of metal, singularly flattened, oscillating slowly downward. Some of them touched him on the face and hands, then fell away, continuing their descent. One lodged between his collar and neck; it was uncomfortably warm, and he snatched it out.

As he rose to the surface, gasping for breath, he saw that he had been a long time under water; he was perceptibly farther down-stream—nearer to safety! The soldiers had almost finished reloading; the metal ramrods flashed all at once in the sunshine as they were drawn from the barrels, turned in the air, and thrust into their sockets. The two sentinels fired, independently and ineffectually.

The hunted man saw all this over his shoulder; he was now swimming vigorously with the current. His brain was as energetic as his arms and legs; he thought with the rapidity of lightning.

"The officer," he reasoned, "will not make that martinet's error a second time. It is as easy to dodge a volley as a single shot. He has probably already given the command to fire at will. God help me, I cannot dodge them all!"

An appalling plash within two yards of him, followed by a loud rushing sound, diminuendo, which seemed to travel back through the air to the fort and died in an explosion which stirred the very river to its deeps. A rising sheet of water, which curved over him, fell down upon him, blinded him, strangled him. The cannon had taken a hand in the game. As he shook his head free from the commotion of the smitten water, he heard the deflected shot humming through the air ahead, and in an instant it was cracking and smashing the branches in the forest beyond.

"They will not do that again," he thought; "the next time they will use a charge of grape. I must keep my eye upon the gun; the smoke will apprize me—the report arrives too late; it lags behind the missile. It is a good gun."

Suddenly he felt himself whirled around and around—spinning like a top. The water, the banks, the forest, the now distant bridge, fort and men—all were commingled and blurred. Objects were represented by their colours only; circular horizontal streaks of colour—that was all he saw. He had been caught in a vortex, and was being

whirled on with a velocity of advance and gyration which made him giddy and sick. In a few moments he was flung upon the gravel at the foot of the left bank of the stream—the southern bank—and behind a projecting point which concealed him from his enemies. The sudden arrest of his motion, the abrasion of one of his hands on the gravel, restored him, and he wept with delight. He dug his fingers into the sand, threw it over himself in handfuls and audibly blessed it. It looked like gold, like diamonds, rubies, emeralds; he could think of nothing beautiful which it did not resemble. The trees upon the bank were giant garden plants; he noted a definite order in their arrangement, inhaled the fragrance of their blooms. A strange, roseate light shone through the spaces among their trunks, and the wind made in their branches the music of Æolian harps. He had no wish to perfect his escape, was content to remain in that enchanting spot until retaken.

A whizz and rattle of grapeshot among the branches high above his head roused him from his dream. The baffled cannoneer had fired a random farewell. He sprung to his feet, rushed up the sloping bank, and plunged into the forest.

All that day he travelled, laying his course by the rounding sun. The forest seemed interminable; nowhere did he discover a break in it, not even a woodman's road. He had not known that he lived in so wild a region. There was something uncanny in the revelation.

By nightfall he was fatigued, footsore, famishing. The thought of his wife and children urged him on. At last he found a road which led him in what he knew to be the right direction. It was as wide and straight as a city street, yet it seemed untraveled. No fields bordered it, no dwelling anywhere. Not so much as the barking of a dog suggested human habitation. The black bodies of the great trees formed a straight wall on both sides, terminating on the horizon in a point, like a diagram in a lesson in perspective. Overhead, as he looked up through this rift in the wood, shone great golden stars looking unfamiliar and grouped in strange constellations. He was sure they were arranged in some order which had a secret and malign significance. The wood on either side was full of singular noises, among which—once, twice and again—he distinctly heard whispers in an unknown tongue.

His neck was in pain, and lifting his hand to it, he found it horribly swollen. He knew that it had a circle of black where the rope had bruised it. His eyes felt congested; he could no longer close them. His tongue was swollen with thirst; he relieved its fever by thrusting it forward from between his teeth into the cool air. How swiftly the turf had carpeted the untraveled avenue! He could no longer feel the roadway beneath his feet!

Doubtless, despite his suffering, he fell asleep while walking, for now he sees another scene—perhaps he has merely recovered from a delirium. He stands at the gate of his own home. All is as he left it, and all bright and beautiful in the morning sunshine. He must have travelled the entire night. As he pushes open the gate and passes up the wide white walk, he sees a

flutter of female garments; his wife, looking fresh and cool and sweet, steps down from the veranda to meet him. At the bottom of the steps she stands waiting, with a smile of ineffable joy, an attitude of matchless grace and dignity. Ah, how beautiful she is! He springs forward with extended arms. As he is about to clasp her, he feels a stunning blow upon the back of the neck, a blinding white light blazes all about him, with a sound like the shock of a cannon—then all is darkness and silence!

Peyton Farquhar was dead; his body, with a broken neck, swung gently from side to side beneath the timbers of the Owl Creek Bridge.

Wife of an Icelander

THE summer went by, warm, quiet, and sad, the first yellow leaves, the gathering of the swallows, the first chrysanthemums bringing joy to the heart of Gaud, wife of Yann, the Icelander.

By the packet boats to Reikiavik, and by the messenger boats, she sent him several letters; but she never could be sure that they reached him.

At the end of July she received a letter from him telling her that he was in good health on the 10th of that month, that the season's fishing promised to be excellent, and that he already had fifteen hundred fish as his share. From one end to the other it was written in that innocently conventional style of all the letters Icelanders write to their families. Men brought up like Yann are completely ignorant of how to express the thousand little things which they think and feel and desire. But as she was more educated than he, she could do that partly for herself, and could read between the lines the deep tenderness which he had not expressed. Several times in the course of the letter he called her "wife," as if he took pleasure in repeating the name; and then the address alone, "A Madame Marguerite Gaos, Maison Moan en Ploubazlanec," was in itself a thing to be read and re-read with joy. She had had so little time in which to be called Madame Marguerite Gaos.

Gaud worked very hard during these summer months. The women of Paimpol, who were doubtful at first of her capacity for work, saying that her hands were too pretty and too like a young lady's had discovered that on the contrary she could make their figures look better than any one else could, and she had almost become a fashionable dressmaker.

What she earned went to beautify the cottage for his return. The wardrobe and the old cupboard-beds were mended and varnished and fitted with bright new locks. She had put new glass into the dormer-window which looked out on the sea, and had hung curtains before it, and bought a new coverlet for the winter, a table, and some chairs.

All this she had done without touching the money which Yann had left her when he went away, and which she was

keeping intact in a little Chinese box to show him when he returned.

During the summer evenings while the light lasted she would sit before the door with Grandmother Yvonne, whose head was much clearer during the warm weather, knitting a beautiful fisherman's jersey in blue wool for Yann. There were borders on the cuffs and collar in wonderfully complicated open stitches. Grandmother Yvonne, who had been famous for knitting in her day, had, little by little, remembered how she used to do the various stitches in her youth, in order to teach them to Gaud; and it was a piece of work which took a great deal of wool, for Yann needed a very big jersey.

But soon, particularly toward evening, they began to feel that the days were growing shorter. Certain plants which had finished blooming in July began to look yellow already, and small pale violets on long stems started up again by the roadside; finally the last days of August arrived, and one evening, off the point of Pors-Even, the first Iceland boat hove in sight.

Everybody rushed to the cliff to welcome it. Which one was it?

"It's the 'Samuel Azénide,'—it's always ahead!"

"The 'Leopoldine' won't be far behind, that's sure," said Yann's old father. "I know how it is out there; when one starts, the others can't stay behind."

The Icelanders were all coming back. Two came in on the second day, four the day after that, and then twelve within the next week. And happiness returned with them throughout the land; and it was holiday for the wives and mothers, holiday also in the wineshops where the pretty Paimpol girls were waiting on the fishermen while they drank.

The "Leopoldine" was among the tardy ones; there were still ten which had not arrived. She could not delay much longer; and Gaud was in a state of delicious excitement at the idea that at the end of the week which she had given herself, so as not to be disappointed, Yann would be there. She kept the house in wonderful order, and everything very clean and neat, ready to receive him. When everything was arranged, there was nothing more to do; and besides, she had not much thought left for important things, in her impatience.

Three of the tardy boats came into port, and then five more. There were only two now that were wanting.

"So," they laughed, "this year it's either the 'Leopoldine' or the 'Marie Jeanne' who will bring up the rear."

And Gaud began to laugh too, excited and prettier than ever in her expectant joy.

But the days went on.

Gaud continued to dress herself carefully, to put on a gay and careless air, and go to the quay to talk with the others.

She kept saying that it was perfectly natural—the delay. Was it not what happened every year? And then such good sailors! and two such good boats!

But in the evening, when she had gotten home again, she began to feel just a little worried and anxious. Could it be possible that she was afraid so soon? Was there any reason for it? And then she grew frightened because she had been afraid.

The 10th of September—how the days flew by!

One morning, when there was already a cold mist over the ground—a real autumn morning,—the rising sun found her seated in the porch of the chapel for shipwrecked sailors, in the place where the widows came to say their prayers, seated motionless, with eyes fixed and temples bound as with a band of iron.

For two days past the melancholy morning mists had begun to rise; and on this morning Gaud awoke with a sharper anxiety, on account of the feeling of winter in the air. What was there about this day, this hour, this minute, different from the preceding ones? Sometimes boats are a whole fortnight late, sometimes even a month.

But there was something peculiar about this morning, surely, since for the first time she had come to sit in the porch of this chapel, and to re-read the names of these dead sailors.

In memory of
GAOS, MOAN,
lost at sea, near the northern fiord—

A great shuddering blast came roaring up from the sea, and at the same time something fell on the roof like rain—dead leaves. A whole shower of them blew into the porch. The old trees, shaken by the ocean wind, were shedding their foliage. Winter was coming—

Lost at sea,
near the northern fiord,
in the tempest of the 4 and 5 of Aug., 1880.

She read it mechanically, while through the grating of the door her eyes searched the ocean's distances. This morning it seemed vague and indistinct under the gray mist, and a heavy bank of fog hung over the horizon like a mourning veil.

Another blast, and more dead leaves came fluttering in,—a stronger gust this time, as if the west wind, which had already scattered the bodies of these men over the sea, wished to disturb even these inscriptions, which recalled their names to those who were yet alive.

In spite of herself, Gaud's eyes were again and again drawn to an empty space in the wall, which seemed to be waiting to be filled. She was pursued with a terrible persistence by the thought of a new tablet which might soon have to be put there, bearing another name, which even in spirit she dared not breathe in such a place.

She shivered as she sat on the granite bench, with her head leaning against the stone wall.

Lost near the northern fiord,
in the tempest of the 4 and 5 of Aug.,
aged 23 years.
May he rest in peace!

A vision of Iceland and its little cemetery came to her mind,—that distant, distant Iceland, lit up at midnight by the low-lying sun. And then suddenly, always in that same empty space which seemed to be waiting, she saw again with horrible distinctness the new tablet of which she had been thinking,—a fresh tablet, with a skull and cross-bones, and in the middle, as if written in letters of fire, a name, that adored name, YANN GAOS! And then she stood up, and uttered a hoarse cry like one insane.

Outside, the gray mist of morning

still lingered over the land, and the dead leaves still blew fluttering in.

Steps along the path. Who could be coming? She stood up very straight, and with a quick movement arranged her cap, and tried to compose her face. The steps were getting nearer; some one was coming in. And she quickly assumed the manner of one who had also come there by chance,—not willing yet, for anything in the world, to seem like the wife of a shipwrecked sailor.

But it was Fante Floury, the wife of the "Leopoldine's" second mate, and she understood immediately what Gaud was doing there; it was needless to try to deceive her. First the two women stood silently facing each other, their terror intensified at having met in this way, almost hating each other for being there. And then, "All those of Tréguier and Saint Brieuc have been back for a week," Fante finally said pitilessly, in a sullen voice, as if annoyed; she was bringing a taper to make a vow.

Oh, yes, a vow! Gaud had preferred not to think about this last resort of the unfortunate. But she went into the chapel behind Fante without speaking; and they knelt down together like two sisters. And there they repeated the prayers to the "Virgin, Star of the Sea" with all their souls. And soon there was nothing to be heard but the sound of their sobbing, and their tears began to rain down upon the ground.

They arose calmer and more confident. Fante helped the trembling Gaud to rise, and put her arms about her and kissed her.

And then, having dried their tears, arranged their hair, brushed the saltpetre and the dust of the stones from their skirts where they had knelt, they went on their different ways without another word.

The end of September this year was like a second summer except for the sadness which was in the air. It was really such beautiful weather that if it had not been for the dead leaves which fell mournfully in showers by the roadside, it would have seemed like the merry month of June. Husbands, lovers, and sweethearts had come back, and everywhere was the joy of a second springtide of love.

Finally, one day, one of the two boats which were over-due was signalled off the coast. But which?

Groups of women quickly gathered on the cliff in mute anxiety.

Gaud was there, pale and trembling, beside her Yann's father.

"I really believe," said the old fisherman, "I believe it's they!—a red pennant and a balloon topsail; it looks wonderfully like them. What do you say, Gaud, my girl?"

"And yet, no," he said with sudden disappointment,—"no, we are deceived again; the bowsprit is not like theirs, and they have a flying jib. So it's not they this time, it's the 'Marie Jeanne;' but they can't be long now, my dear."

And day followed day, and every night came in its due time, with inexorable monotony.

Gaud was almost foolishly particular about her dress, for fear of looking like the wife of a lost sailor, and was angry when the others spoke to her with half-expressed compassion, turning away her eyes so as not to meet the pitying looks which made her heart stand still.

She had taken lately to going every morning to the high cliff of Pors-Even, at the very end of the coast, passing behind the house of Yann's father so that his mother and little sisters should not see her. She would go all alone to this last extreme point in the country of Ploubazlanec, where the cliff cuts into the gray waters of the Channel like the horn of a reindeer, and would sit there the whole day long at the foot of the lonely cross, which overlooks the mighty expanse of waters. There are many such granite crosses standing out on the bold jutting cliffs of this sea-shore, as if asking for pity from this restless mysterious thing which draws men to her and never gives them back, keeping by preference the best and bravest for herself.

About this cross of Pors-Even, the fields were even green with their carpet of short green furze; and at this height, the sea-air was very pure, with scarce a trace of the salt smell of seaweed, but filled with the delicious fragrance of September.

All the irregularities of the coast could be seen from this point, jutting out one after the other in the distance. The shore in this land of Brittany ends off in rugged points which stretch far out into the tranquil emptiness of the waters. Just at the edge the mirror of the sea crumbles on the rocks, but beyond, nothing disturbs its polished surface, and a gentle caressing sound, low but all-pervading, comes up from the foot of all the cliffs. And how calm were these wide waters, how lucid these mighty depths! The great blue waste, the tomb of the ill-fated Gaoses, guarded ever its impenetrable mystery, while the breezes, as feeble as a sigh, scattered abroad the odor of the low heather, which bloomed again in this last autumn sunshine.

When the tide went out, deep and ever-widening spots were left along the shore, as if the waters of the Channel were slowly vanishing; and then with the same slow movement the waters rose again, and continued their endless washing to and fro without a thought of the silent dead below.

And Gaud remained there, seated at the foot of the cross, in the midst of the deep stillness, until the night came and she could see no more.

The end of September had come. She no longer ate; she no longer slept.

And now she remained at home, bent over, with her hands between her knees, her head leaning against the granite wall. Why should she get up? Why should she go to bed? She threw herself on her bed without undressing, when she was too exhausted to sit up longer. Otherwise she remained there perfectly still, and almost stupefied, her teeth chattering as if with cold, and with this feeling as of a band of iron about her temples. Her face was drawn, and her mouth was dry and feverish; and sometimes she uttered a hoarse groan in her throat, over and over for hours together, while she beat her head against the granite wall.

And then she would call Yann by his name with words of love,—very tenderly in a low voice, as if he were quite near to her; and it sometimes happened that she would think of other things, little insignificant things, amusing herself, for instance, in watching the shadows of the china Virgin and the holy-water basin gradually lengthening, as the light declined, along the

high woodwork of her bed. And then her agony would return to her more horrible than ever, and she would begin that cry again, and beat her head against the wall.

And all the hours of the day went by, one after the other, and all the hours of the night and all those of the morning. When she counted up how long a time had gone by since he ought to have been back, she was seized with an unendurable terror; and she no longer wished to know the dates or the names of the days as they passed.

There are usually some signs of shipwrecks in Iceland; those who return have seen the tragedy from afar, or have probably found some pieces of the wreck, or a floating body,—some indication which tells the story. But, no! no one had seen or heard anything of the "Leopoldine." The crew of the "Marie Jeanne," who were the last who had seen her, on the 2d of August, said that she was then going to fish farther up toward the north; and after this all was lost in impenetrable mystery.

To wait, always to wait, without ever knowing anything! When would the moment come when she would really wait no more? She did not know even that, and now she almost wished that she soon might—

Oh, if he were dead, why, at least was not some one pitiful enough to tell her so? Oh, to see him—wherever he was at this moment—to see him, or what remained of him! If only the Virgin to whom she had prayed so long would grant her by a sort of second sight a vision of him, of her Yann!—of him alive, sailing his boat toward home, or at least his body tossed by the sea!

Sometimes the vision of a sail rising on the horizon would suddenly come to her,—the "Leopoldine" approaching, hastening to get in! And then she would make an unconscious movement to get up, to run out, to look over the ocean to see if it were true. But she would fall back in her seat again. Alas! where was she at this moment,—the "Leopoldine,"—where was she likely to be?

Off there, doubtless, in that terribly distant Iceland, deserted and wrecked and lost. And it always ended with another vision, the same which ever relentlessly pursued her,—a dismantled and empty wreck, cradled on a silent sea of rosy gray, cradled gently, silently, tenderly, as if in mockery, in the still solitude of those lifeless waters.

Two o'clock in the morning. It was at night particularly that Gaud listened to every approaching step. At the least murmur, at the slightest unaccustomed sound, her temples throbbed; and her nerves had so long been overstrained that the least noise was agony to her.

Two o'clock in the morning. On this night, as on all the others, she was lying with her hands clasped and eyes open in the darkness, listening to the sound of the wind sighing its ceaseless complaint along the shore. Suddenly a man's steps!—steps hastening along the road. At such an hour who could be passing? She raised herself in bed, stirred to the depths of her soul, while her heart ceased its beating.

Some one stopped before the door

and was mounting the little stone steps.

He—oh, joy of heaven!—he! Some one had knocked; it could be no one else. She was out of bed in her bare feet; she, so feeble for so many days, jumped out as nimbly as a cat, with arms outstretched to embrace her beloved. Doubtless the "Leopoldine" had arrived in the night, and had anchored off the bay of Pors-Even, and he was rushing to come to her. She arranged all this in her head with the rapidity of lightning, and now she was breaking her nails on the fastening of the door, in her mad haste to slide back the rusty bolt.

Ah!—and then she slowly recoiled, sinking down with her head fallen on her breast. Her beautiful, foolish dream was over. It was only Fantie, their neighbor. By the time she well understood that it was not he, that no sign of her Yann had passed by in the night, she had fallen again by degrees into the same gulf,—to the same depths of awful despair. Poor Fantie apologized. His wife, as she knew, was at her very worst at present, and their child was choking in its cradle with the croup; and he had come to ask for help while he ran to Paimpol for a doctor.

What difference did all that make to her? She had become almost savage in her grief, and had no longer any thought for the troubles of others. Sunk on a bench before him, with her eyes fixed as if she were dead, she neither spoke, nor listened, nor looked at him. What did it matter to her what the man was saying?

And then he understood why she had opened the door so quickly for him, was sorry for the pain he had caused her, and began to stammer out an apology. True, he ought not to have disturbed her,—not her.

"Not me?" replied Gaud, quickly; "and why not me, Fantie?"

Life suddenly returned to her with the fear of being thought by others to despair. She would not endure that yet. And then, in her turn, she was sorry for him; so she dressed herself and followed him, finding strength enough to go and take care of his little child.

When she came back, to throw herself on her bed at four o'clock, she fell asleep for a moment, because she was tired out.

But this one instant of great joy had left an impression on her mind which still remained in spite of everything. She awoke soon with a shock, half rising out of her bed, at the remembrance of something. There had been some news about her Yann; and in the confusion of ideas which came into her head, she tried quickly to recall what it was.

Ah, nothing, alas!—no, nothing but Fantie; and a second time she fell into the depths of her old despair. No; in reality nothing had happened to change her dull and hopeless waiting. But to have thought that he was so near,—it was as if some message from his spirit had come to float in the air about her. It seemed like what they called in Brittany a "warning"; and she listened more carefully still to all the steps outside, believing that somebody would come who would speak of him.

And in fact, when it was daylight, Yann's father did come to see her.

He took off his cap, brushed back his beautiful white hair, which was curly like his son's, and sat down by Gaud's bed. His heart was torn with anguish too, for his Yann, his handsome Yann, was his eldest, his favorite, and his pride. But he did not despair,—no, really he did not yet despair; and he began to reassure Gaud in a very tender way. In the first place, those who had last come back from Iceland all told of very heavy fogs which might easily have delayed the ship, and then, besides, he had had an idea they might very possibly have stopped at the Feroë Islands, which lie far northward on the route, and whence letters are very long in coming. The same thing had happened to him forty years ago, and his poor dead mother had already had Mass read for his soul. Such a good ship she was,—the "Leopoldine," —almost new, and with such a good crew on board!

Old Mother Moan prowled about them, shaking her head. Her grandchild's trouble had almost given her back her strength and her mental faculties. And she took care of the house, looking from time to time, as she went about, at the yellowing little photograph of her Sylvestre, hanging on the granite wall, with its anchors and its mourning wreath of black pearls; but since this seafaring life had deprived her of her last grandson, she no longer had any faith in the return of any sailor. She only prayed to the Virgin now from fear, with her poor old lips only, guarding an unforgetting bitterness ever in her heart.

But Gaud listened eagerly to all these consoling words, her great eyes with their black circles regarding with deep tenderness this old man who looked so like her love. Only to have him there next to her seemed like a protection against death, and she felt more hopeful, and as if Yann were nearer to her; and as her tears fell silently and with greater calmness, she began to say over again to herself her ardent prayers to the "Virgin, Star of the Sea."

They had stopped off there in those islands, to repair damages perhaps; it was indeed quite possible.

Gaud got up, braided her hair, and made a kind of toilet, as if he really might be coming back. Surely, all hope was not lost, since he, his father, did not despair; and for several days she began to look for Yann again.

It was full autumn, late autumn; and there were sombre twilights, when it soon grew dark in the old cottage, and dark also all about in the old Breton country. The days themselves seemed scarcely more than twilights, and the clouds which floated slowly by often made it quite dark at noon-day.

The wind roared ceaselessly, like the distant sound of great church organs playing ominous or despairing tunes, or at other times rushed up against the door, raging like a wild beast.

Gaud had become pale, so pale, looking all the time more weak and worn, as if age had already brushed her with its plumeless wing. Very often she would look over Yann's things,—his beautiful wedding clothes, — folding them and unfolding them like a madwoman, and particularly one of his blue woollen jerseys which still kept the shape of his body. When she threw it gently on the table, it fell naturally into the contour of his shoulders and

chest. And finally she put it alone in a drawer in the wardrobe, not wishing to stir it again, for fear of its losing that impression the sooner, if disturbed.

Every evening cold fogs drove up across the shore; and she looked out of her window over the melancholy country, watching the little puffs of white smoke beginning to rise here and there from the cottages of the neighbors. There everywhere the men had returned like wandering birds brought back by the cold; and before many a hearth-fire pleasant evenings would be spent, for the revival of love had come again with winter throughout all this country of the Icelanders.

Clutching at the thought of those islands where he might be stopping, she began, as it were, to hope again, and once more to expect him.

Yann never came back.

One August night out there off the coast of sombre Iceland, in the midst of a great fury of sound had been celebrated his marriage with the sea,—with the sea which had formerly been his nurse. It was she who had cradled him, who had made him a strong and broad-chested youth, and had then taken him in his magnificent manhood for herself alone. A profound mystery had enveloped these monstrous nuptials. Dark veils were shaken constantly above them, curtains moving and twisted, stretched there to hide the feast; and the bride had given voice, making all the time her most horrible loud noise to drown the cries.

And he, remembering Gaud, his wife of flesh, had defended himself, struggling like a giant, against this spouse, which was the tomb, until the moment when he gave himself up, his arms open to receive her, with a great deep cry like the death-roar of a bull, his mouth already filled with water, his arms open, outstretched and stiff forever.

Taking of Lungtungpen

So we loosed a bloomin' volley,
An' we made the beggars cut,
An' when our pouch was emptied out,
We used the bloomin' butt,
Ho! My!
Don't yer come anigh,
When Tommy is a playin' with the bay-
nit an' the butt.
Barrack Room Ballad.

My friend Private Mulvaney told me this, sitting on the parapet of the road to Dagshai, when we were hunting butterflies together. He had theories about the Army, and colored clay pipes perfectly. He said that the young soldier is the best to work with, "on account av the surpassing innocinse av the child."

"Now, listen!" said Mulvaney, throwing himself full length on the wall in the sun. "I'm a born scutt av the barrick-room! The Army's mate an' dhrink to me, bekaze I'm wan av the few that can't quit ut. I've put in sivinteen years, an' the pipeclay's in the marrow av me. Av I cud have kept out av wan beg dhrink a month, I wud have been a Hon'ry Lift'nint by this time—a nuisance to my betthers, a

laughin'-shtock to my equils, an' a curse to meself. Bein' fwhat I am, I'm Privit Mulvaney, wid no good-conduc' pay an' a devourin' thirst. Always barrin' me little frind Bobs Bahadur, I know as much about the Army as most men."

I said something here.

"Wolseley be shot! Betune you an' me an' that butterfly net, he's a ramblin', incoherent sort av a divil, wid wan oi on the Quane an' the Coort, an' the other on his blessed silf—everlastin'ly playing Saysur an' Alexandrier rowled into a lump. Now Bobs is a sinsible little man. Wid Bobs an' a few three-year-olds, I'd swape any army av the earth into a towel, an' throw it away aftherward. Faith, I'm not jokin'! 'Tis the bhoys—the raw bhoys—that don't know fwhat a bullet manes, an' wudn't care av they did—that dhu the work. They're crammed wid bull-mate till they fairly *ramps* wid good livin'; and thin, av they don't fight, they blow each other's hids off. 'Tis the trut' I'm tellin' you. They shud be kept on water an' rice in the hot weather; but ther'd be a mut'ny av 'twas done.

"Did ye iver hear how Privit Mulvaney tuk the town av Lungtungpen? I thought not! 'Twas the Lift'nint got the credit; but 'twas me planned the schame. A little before I was inviladed from Burma, me an' four-an'-twenty young wans undher a Lift'nint Brazenose, was ruinin' our dijeshins thryin' to catch dacoits. An' such double-ended divils I niver knew! 'Tis only a *dah* an' a Snider that makes a dacoit. Widout thim, he's a paceful cultivator, an' felony for to shoot. We hunted, an' we hunted, an' tuk fever an' elephints now an' again; but no dacoits. Evenshually, we *puckarowed* wan man. 'Trate him tinderly,' sez the Lift'nint. So I tuk him away into the jungle, wid the Burmese Interprut'r an' my clanin'-rod. Sez I to the man, 'My paceful squireen,' sez I, 'you shquot on your hunkers an' dimonstrate to *my* frind here, where *your* frinds are whin they're at home?' Wid that I introjuced him to the clanin'-rod, an' he comminst to jabber; the Interprut'r interprutin' in betweens, an' me helpin' the Intilligince Department wid my clanin'-rod whin the man misremimbered.

"Prisintly, I learn that, acrost the river, about nine miles away, was a town just dhrippin' wid dahs, an' bohs an' arrows, an' dacoits, and elephints, an' *jingles*. 'Good!' sez I; 'this office will now close!'

"That night, I went to the Lift'nint an' communicates my information. I never thought much of Lift'nint Brazenose till that night. He was shtiff wid books an' the-ouries, an' all manner av thrimmin's no manner av use. 'Town did ye say?' sez he. 'Accordin' to the the-ouries av War, we shud wait for reinforcemints.'—'Faith!' thinks I, 'we'd betther dig our graves thin;' for the nearest throops was up to their shtocks in the marshes out Mimbu way. 'But,' says the Lift'nint, 'since 'tis a speshil case, I'll make an excepshin. We'll visit this Lungtungpen to-night.'

"The bhoys was fairly woild wid deloight whin I tould 'em; an', by this an' that, they wint through the jungle like buck-rabbits. About midnight we come to the shtrame, which I had clane forgot to minshin to my orficer. I was on, ahead, wid four bhoys, an' I thought that the Lift'nint might want

to the-ourise. 'Shtrip boys!' sez I. 'Shtrip to the buff, an' shwim in where glory waits!'—'But I *can't* shwim!' sez two av thim. 'To think I should live to hear that from a bhoy wid a board-school edukashin!' sez I. 'Take a lump av timber, an' me an' Conolly here will ferry ye over, ye young ladies!'

"We got an ould tree-trunk, an' pushed off wid the kits an' the rifles on it. The night was chokin' dhark, an' just as we was fairly embarked, I heard the Lift'nint behind av me callin' out. 'There's a bit av a *nullah* here, sorr,' sez I, 'but I can feel the bottom already.' So I cud, for I was not a yard from the bank.

"'Bit av a *nullah!* Bit av an eshtuary!' sez the Lift'nint. 'Go on, ye mad Irishman! Shtrip bhoys!' I heard him laugh; an' the bhoys begun shtrippin' an' rollin' a log into the wather to put their kits on. So me an' Conolly shtruck out through the warm wather wid our log, an' the rest come on behind.

"That shtrame was miles woide! Orth'ris, on the rear-rank log, whispers we had got into the Thames below Sherness by mistake. 'Kape on swimmin', ye little blayguard,' sez I, 'an' don't go pokin' your dirty jokes at the Irriwaddy.'—'Silence, men!' sings out the Lift'nint. So we shwum on into the black dhark, wid our chests on the logs, trustin' in the saints an' the luck av the British Army.

"Evenshually, we hit ground—a bit av sand—an' a man. I put my heel on the back av him. He skreeched an' ran.

"'*Now* we've done it!' sez Lift'nint Brazenose. 'Where the Divil *is* Lungtungpen?' There was about a minute and a half to wait. The bhoys laid a hould av their rifles an' some thried to put their belts on; we was marchin' wid fixed baynits av coorse. Thin we knew where Lungtungpen was; for we had hit the river-wall av it in the dhark, an' the whole town blazed wid thim messin' *jingles* an' Sniders like a cat's back on a frosty night. They was firin' all ways at wanst; but over our hids into the shtrame.

"'Have you got your rifles?' sez Brazenose. 'Got 'em!' sez Orth'ris. 'I've got that thief Mulvaney's for all my back-pay, an' she'll kick my heart sick wid that blunderin' long shtock av hers.'—'Go on!' yells Brazenose, whippin' his sword out. 'Go on an' take the town! An' the Lord have mercy on our sowls!'

"Thin the bhoys gave wan divastatin' howl, an' pranced into the dhark, feelin' for the town, an' blindin' an' stiffin' like Cavalry Ridin' Masters whin the grass pricked their bare legs. I hammered wid the butt at some bamboothing that felt wake, an' the rest come an' hammered contagious, while the *jingles* was jingling, an' feroshus yells from inside was shplittin' our ears. We was too close under the wall for thim to hurt us.

"Eventually, the thing, whatever ut was, bruk; an' the six-and-twinty av us tumbled, wan after the other, naked as we was borrun, into the town of Lungtungpen. There was a *melly* av a sumpshus kind for a whoile; but whether they tuk us, all white an' wet, for a new breed av divil, or a new kind av dacoit, I don't know. They ran as though we was both, an' we wint into thim, baynit an' butt, shriekin' wid laughin'. There was torches in the shtreets, an' I saw little Orth'ris rubbin'

his showlther ivry time he loosed my long-shtock Martini; an' Brazenose walkin' into the gang wid his sword, like Diarmid av the Gowlden Collar—barring he hadn't a stitch av clothin' on him. We diskivered elephints wid dacoits under their bellies, an', what wid wan thing an' other, we was busy till mornin' takin' possession av the town of Lungtungpen.

"Thin we halted an' formed up, the wimmen howlin' in the houses an' Lift'nint Brazenose blushin' pink in the light av the mornin' sun. 'Twas the most ondasint p'rade I iver tuk a hand in. Foive-and-twenty privits an' a orficer av the Line in review ordher, an' not as much as wud dust a fife betune 'em all in the way of clothin'! Eight av us had their belts an' pouches on; but the rest had gone in wid a handful av cartridges an' the skin God gave them. *They* was as nakid as Vanus.

"'Number off from the right!' sez the Lift'nint. 'Odd numbers fall out to dress; even numbers pathrol the town till relieved by the dressing party.' Let me tell you, pathrollin' a town wid nothin' on is an ex*pay*rience. I patrolled for tin minutes, an' begad, before 'twas over, I blushed. The women laughed so. I niver blushed before or since; but I blushed all over my carkiss thin. Orth'ris didn't pathrol. He saz only, 'Portsmouth Barricks an' the 'Ard av a Sunday!' Thin he lay down an' rolled any ways wid laughin'.

"Whin we was all dhressed, we counted the dead—sivinty-foive dacoits besides wounded. We tuk five elephints, a hunder' an' sivinty Sniders, two hunder' dahs, and a lot av other burglarious thruck. Not a man av us was hurt—excep' maybe the Lift'nint, an' he from the shock of his dasincy.

"The Headman av Lungtungpen, who surrinder'd himself, asked the Interprut'r—' 'Av the English fight like that wid their clo'es off, what in the wurruld do they do wid their clo'es on?' Orth'ris began rowlin' his eyes an' crackin' his fingers an' dancin' a step-dance for to impress the Headman. He ran to his house; an' we spint the rest av the day carryin' the Lift'nint on our showlthers round the town, an' playin' wid the Burmese babies—fat, little, brown little divils, as pretty as picturs.

"Whin I was inviladed for the dysent'ry to India, I sez to the Lift'nint, 'Sorr,' sez I, 'you've the makin's in you av a great man; but, av you'll let an ould sodger spake, you're too fond of the-ourisin'.' He shuk hands wid me and sez, 'Hit high, hit low, there's no plasin' you, Mulvaney. You've seen me waltzin' through Lungtungpen like a Red Injin widout the warpaint, an' you say I'm too fond av the-ourisin'?'—'Sorr,' sez I, for I loved the bhoy; 'I wud waltz wid you in that condishin through *Hell*, an' so wud the rest av the men!' Thin I wint downshtrame in the flat an' left him my blessin'. May the Saints carry ut where ut shud go, for he was a fine upstandin' young orficer.

"To reshume. Fwhat I've said jist shows the use av three-year-olds. Wud fifty seasoned sodgers have taken Lungtungpen in the dhark that way? No! They'd know the risk av fever and chill. Let alone the shootin'. Two hundher' might have done ut. But the three-year-olds know little an' care less; an' where there's no fear, there's no danger. Catch thim young, feed

thim high, an' by the honor av that great, little man Bobs, behind a good orficer, 'tisn't only dacoits they'd smash wid their clo'es off—'tis Con-ti-nental Ar-r-rmies! They tuk Lungtungpen nakid; an' they'd take St. Pethersburg in their dhrawers! Begad, they would that!

"Here's your pipe, sorr. Shmoke her tinderly wid honey-dew, afther letting the reek av the Canteen plug die away. But 'tis no good, thanks to you all the same, fillin' my pouch wid your chopped hay. Canteen baccy's like the Army. It shpoils a man's taste for moilder things."

So saying, Mulvaney took up his butterfly-net, and returned to barracks.

The Lovers

Four men sat by the winter fire talking and telling tales, in a house that the wind howled round.

And one of them, the eldest, said: "When I was a boy, before you came to this land, that bar of red sand rock, which makes a fall in our river, had only just been formed; for it used to stand above the river in a great cliff, tunnelled by a cave about midway between the green-growing grass and the green-flowing river; and it fell one night, when you had not yet come to this land, no, nor your fathers.

"Now, concerning this cliff, or pike rather (for it was a tall slip of rock and not part of a range), many strange tales were told; and my father used to say, that in his time many would have explored that cave, either from covetousness (expecting to find gold therein), or from that love of wonders which most young men have, but fear kept them back. Within the memory of man, however, some had entered, and, so men said, were never seen on earth again; but my father said that the tales told concerning such, very far from deterring him (then quite a youth) from the quest of this cavern, made him all the more earnestly long to go; so that one day in his fear, my grandfather, to prevent him, stabbed him in the shoulder, so that he was obliged to keep his bed for long; and somehow he never went, and died at last without ever having seen the inside of the cavern.

"My father told me many wondrous tales about the place, whereof for a long time I have been able to remember nothing; yet, by some means or another, a certain story has grown up in my heart, which I will tell you something of: a story which no living creature ever told me, though I do not remember the time when I knew it not. Yes, I will tell you some of it, not all perhaps, but as much as I am allowed to tell."

The man stopped and pondered awhile, leaning over the fire where the flames slept under the caked coal: he was an old man, and his hair was quite white. He spoke again presently. "And I have fancied sometimes, that in some way, how I know not, I am mixed up with the strange story I am going to tell you." Again he ceased, and gazed at the fire, bending his head down till his beard touched his knees;

then, rousing himself, said in a changed voice (for he had been speaking dreamily hitherto): "That strange-looking old house that you all know, with the limes and yew-trees before it, and the double line of very old yew-trees leading up from the gateway-tower to the porch—you know how no one will live there now because it is so eerie, and how even that bold bad lord that would come there, with his turbulent followers, was driven out in shame and disgrace by invisible agency. Well, in times past there dwelt in that house an old grey man, who was lord of that estate, his only daughter, and a young man, a kind of distant cousin of the house, whom the lord had brought up from a boy, as he was the orphan of a kinsman who had fallen in combat in his quarrel. Now, as the young knight and the young lady were both beautiful and brave, and loved beauty and good things ardently, it was natural enough that they should discover as they grew up that they were in love with one another; and afterwards, as they went on loving one another, it was, alas! not unnatural that they should sometimes have half-quarrels, very few and far between indeed, and slight to lookers-on, even while they lasted, but nevertheless intensely bitter and unhappy to the principal parties thereto. I suppose their love then, whatever it has grown to since, was not so all-absorbing as to merge all differences of opinion and feeling, for again there were such differences then. So, upon a time it happened, just when a great war had arisen, and Lawrence (for that was the knight's name) was sitting, and thinking of war, and his departure from home; sitting there in a very grave, almost a stern mood, that Ella, his betrothed, came in, gay and sprightly, in a humour that Lawrence often enough could little understand, and this time liked less than ever, yet the bare sight of her made him yearn for her full heart, which he was not to have yet; so he caught her by the hand, and tried to draw her down to him, but she let her hand lie loose in his, and did not answer the pressure in which his heart flowed to hers; then he arose and stood before her, face to face, but she drew back a little, yet he kissed her on the mouth and said, though a rising in his throat almost choked his voice, 'Ella, are you sorry I am going?' 'Yea,' she said, 'and nay, for you will shout my name among the sword-flashes, and you will fight for me.' 'Yes,' he said, 'for love and duty, dearest.' 'For duty? ah! I think, Lawrence, if it were not for me, you would stay at home and watch the clouds, or sit under the linden trees singing dismal love ditties of your own making, dear knight: truly, if you turn out a great warrior, I too shall live in fame, for I am certainly the making of your desire to fight.' He let drop his hands from her shoulders, where he had laid them, and said, with a faint flush over his face, 'You wrong me, Ella, for, though I have never wished to fight for the mere love of fighting, and though,' (and here again he flushed a little) 'and though I am not, I well know, so free of the fear of death as a good man would be, yet for this duty's sake, which is really a higher love, Ella, love of God, I trust I would risk life, nay honour, even if not willingly, yet cheerfully at least.' 'Still duty, duty,' she said; 'you lay, Lawrence, as many people do most stress on the point where you are weak-

est; moreover, those knights who in time past have done wild, mad things merely at their ladies' word, scarcely did so for duty; for they owed their lives to their country surely, to the cause of good, and should not have risked them for a whim, and yet you praised them the other day.' 'Did I?' said Lawrence; 'well, and in a way they were much to be praised, for even blind love and obedience is well; but reasonable love, reasonable obedience is so far better as to be almost a different thing; yet, I think, if the knights did well partly, the ladies did altogether ill: for if they had faith in their lovers, and did this merely from a mad longing to see them do 'noble' deeds, then they had but little faith in God, Who can, and at His good pleasure does give time and opportunity to every man, if he will but watch for it, to serve Him with reasonable service, and gain love and all noble things in greater measure thereby: but if these ladies did as they did, that they might prove their knights, then surely did they lack faith both in God and man. I do not think that two friends even could live together on such terms but for lovers—ah! Ella, Ella, why do you look so at me? on this day, almost the last, we shall be together for long; Ella, your face is changed, your eyes—O Christ! help her and me, help her, good Lord.' 'Lawrence,' she said, speaking quickly and in jerks, 'dare you, for my sake, sleep this night in the cavern of the red pike? for I say to you that, faithful or not, I doubt your courage.' But she was startled when she saw him, and how the fiery blood rushed up to his forehead, then sank to his heart again, and his face became as pale as the face of a dead man: he looked at her and said, 'Yes, Ella, I will go now; for what matter where I go?' He turned and moved toward the door; he was almost gone, when that evil spirit left her, and she cried out aloud, passionately, eagerly: 'Lawrence, Lawrence, come back once more, if only to strike me dead with your knightly sword.' He hesitated, wavered, turned, and in another moment she was lying in his arms weeping into his hair.

"'And yet, Ella, the spoken word, the thought of our hearts cannot be recalled, I must go, and go this night too, only promise one thing.' 'Dearest what? you are always right!' 'Love, you must promise that if I come not again by tomorrow at moonrise, you will go to the red pike, and, having entered the cavern, go where God leads you, and seek me, and never leave that quest, even if it end not but with death.' 'Lawrence, how your heart beats! poor heart! are you afraid that I shall hesitate to promise to perform that which is the only thing I could do? I know I am not worthy to be with you, yet I must be with you in body or soul, or body and soul will die.' They sat silent, and the birds sang in the garden of lilies beyond; then said Ella again; 'Moreover, let us pray God to give us longer life, so that if our natural lives are short for the accomplishment of this quest, we may have more, yea, even many more lives.' 'He will, my Ella,' said Lawrence, 'and I think, nay, am sure that our wish will be granted; and I, too, will add a prayer, but will ask it very humbly, namely, that he will give me another chance or more to fight in his cause, another life to live instead of this fail-

ure.' 'Let us pray too that we may meet, however long the time be before our meeting,' she said; so they knelt down and prayed, hand fast locked in hand meantime; and afterwards they sat in that chamber facing the east, hard by the garden of lilies; and the sun fell from his noontide light gradually, lengthening the shadows, and when he sank below the sky-line all the sky was faint, tender, crimson on a ground of blue; the crimson faded too, and the moon began to rise, but when her golden rim first showed over the wooded hills, Lawrence arose; they kissed one long trembling kiss, and then he went and armed himself; and their lips did not meet again after that, for such a long, long time, so many weary years; for he had said: 'Ella, watch me from the porch, but touch me not again at this time; only, when the moon shows level with the lily-heads, go into the porch and watch me from thence.'

"And he was gone;—you might have heard her heart beating while the moon very slowly rose, till it shone through the rose-covered trellises, level with the lily-heads; then she went to the porch and stood there.—

"And she saw him walking down toward the gateway-tower, clad in his mailcoat, with a bright, crestless helmet on his head, and his trenchant sword newly grinded, girt to his side; and she watched him going between the yew-trees, which began to throw shadows from the shining of the harvest moon. She stood there in the porch, and round by the corners of the eaves of it looked down towards her and the inside of the porch two serpent-dragons, carved in stone; and on their scales, and about their leering eyes, grew the yellow lichen; she shuddered as she saw them stare at her, and drew closer toward the half-open door; she, standing there, clothed in white from her throat till over her feet, altogether ungirdled; and her long yellow hair, without plait or band, fell down behind and lay along her shoulders, quietly, because the night was without wind, and she too was now standing scarcely moving a muscle.

"She gazed down the line of the yew-trees, and watched how, as he went for the most part with a firm step, he yet shrank somewhat from the shadows of the yews; his long brown hair flowing downward, swayed with him as he walked; and the golden threads interwoven with it, as the fashion was with the warriors in those days, sparkled out from among it now and then; and the faint, far-off moonlight lit up the waves of his mail-coat; he walked fast, and was disappearing in the shadows of the trees near the moat, but turned before he was quite lost in them, and waved his ungauntletted hand; then she heard the challenge of the warder, the falling of the drawbridge, the swing of the heavy wicket-gate on its hinges; and, into the brightening lights, and deepening shadows of the moonlight he went from her sight; and she left the porch and went to the chapel, all that night praying earnestly there.

"But he came not back again all the next day, and Ella wandered about that house pale, and fretting her heart away; so when night came and the moon, she arrayed herself in that same raiment that she had worn on the night before, and went toward the river and the red pike.

"The broad moon shone right over it

by the time she came to the river; the pike rose up from the other side, and she thought at first that she would have to go back again, cross over the bridge, and so get to it; but, glancing down on the river just as she turned, she saw a little boat fairly gilt and painted, and with a long slender paddle in it, lying on the water, stretching out its silken painter as the stream drew it downwards, she entered it, and taking the paddle made for the other side; the moon meanwhile turning the eddies to silver over the dark green water: she landed beneath the shadow of that great pile of sandstone, where the grass grew green, and the flowers sprung fair right up to the foot of the bare barren rock; it was cut in many steps till it reached the cave, which was overhung by creepers and matted grass; the stream swept the boat downwards, and Ella, her heart beating so as almost to stop her breath, mounted the steps slowly, slowly. She reached at last the platform below the cave, and turning, gave a long gaze at the moonlit country; 'her last,' she said; then she moved, and the cave hid her as the water of the warm seas close over the pearl-diver.

"Just so the night before had it hidden Lawrence. And they never came back, they two:—never, the people say. I wonder what their love has grown to now; ah! they love, I know, but cannot find each other yet; I wonder also if they ever will."

So spoke Hugh the white-haired. But he who sat over against him, a soldier as it seemed, black-bearded, with wild grey eyes that his great brows hung over far; he, while the others sat still, awed by some vague sense of spirits being very near them; this man, Giles, cried out—"Never? old Hugh, it is not so.—Speak! I cannot tell you how it happened, but I know it was not so, not so:—speak quick, Hugh! tell us all, all!"

"Wait a little, my son, wait," said Hugh; "the people indeed said they never came back again at all, but I, but I—Ah! the time is long past over." So he was silent, and sank his head on his breast, though his old thin lips moved, as if he talked softly to himself, and the light of past days flickered in his eyes.

Meanwhile Giles sat with his hands clasped finger over finger, tightly, "till the knuckles whitened;" his lips were pressed firmly together; his breast heaved as though it would burst, as though it must be rid of its secret. Suddenly he sprang up, and in a voice that was a solemn chant, began: "In full daylight, long ago, on a slumberously-wrathful, thunderous afternoon of summer;"—then across his chant ran the old man's shrill voice: "On an October day, packed close with heavy-lying mist, which was more than mere autumn-mist:"—the solemn stately chanting dropped, the shrill voice went on; Giles sank down again, and Hugh standing there, swaying to and fro to the measured ringing of his own shrill voice, his long beard moving with him, said:—

"On such a day, warm, and stifling so that one could scarcely breathe even down by the sea-shore, I went from bed to bed in the hospital of the pest-laden city with my soothing draughts and medicines. And there went with me a holy woman, her face pale with much watching; yet I think even without those same desolate lonely watchings

her face would still have been pale. She was not beautiful, her face being somewhat peevish-looking; apt, she seemed, to be made angry by trifles, and, even on her errand of mercy, she spoke roughly to those she tended:—no, she was not beautiful, yet I could not help gazing at her, for her eyes were very beautiful and looked out from her ugly face as a fair maiden might look from a grim prison between the window-bars of it.

"So, going through that hospital, I came to a bed at last, whereon lay one who had not been struck down by fever or plague, but had been smitten through the body with a sword by certain robbers, so that he had narrowly escaped death. Huge of frame, with stern suffering face he lay there; and I came to him, and asked him of his hurt, and how he fared, while the day grew slowly toward even, in that pest-chamber looking toward the west; the sister came to him soon and knelt down by his bedside to tend him.

"O Christ! As the sun went down on that dim misty day, the clouds and the thickly-packed mist cleared off, to let him shine on us, on that chamber of woes and bitter unpurifying tears; and the sunlight wrapped those two, the sick man and the ministering woman, shone on them—changed, changed utterly. Good Lord! How was I struck dumb, nay, almost blinded by that change; for there—yes there, while no man but I wondered; there, instead of the unloving nurse, knelt a wonderfully beautiful maiden, clothed all in white, and with long golden hair down her back. Tenderly she gazed at the wounded man, as her hands were put about his head, lifting it up from the pillow but a very little; and he no longer the grim, strong wounded man, but fair, and in the first bloom of youth; a bright polished helmet crowned his head, a mail-coat flowed over his breast, and his hair streamed down long from his head, while from among it here and there shone out threads of gold.

"So they spake thus in a quiet tone: 'Body and soul together again, Ella, love; how long will it be now before the last time of all?' 'Long,' she said, 'but the years pass; talk no more, dearest, but let us think only, for the time is short, and our bodies call up memories, change love to better even than it was in the old time.'

"Silence so, while you might count a hundred, then with a great sigh: 'Farewell, Ella, for long,'—'Farewell, Lawrence,' and the sun sank, all was as before.

"But I stood at the foot of the bed pondering, till the sister coming to me, said: "Master Physician, this is no time for dreaming; act—the patients are waiting, the fell sickness grows worse in this hot close air; feel'—(and she swung open the casement), 'the outer air is no fresher than the air inside; the wind blows dead toward the west, coming from the stagnant marshes; the sea is like a stagnant pool too, you can scarce hear the sound of the long, low surge breaking.' I turned from her and went up to the sick man, and said: 'Sir Knight, in spite of all the sickness about you, you yourself better strangely, and another month will see you with your sword girt to your side again.' 'Thanks, kind master Hugh,' he said, but impatiently, as if his mind were on other things, and

he turned in his bed away from me restlessly.

"And till late that night, I ministered to the sick in that hospital, but when I went away, I walked down to the sea, and paced there to and fro over the hard sand: and the moon showed bloody with the hot mist, which the sea would not take on its bosom, though the dull east wind blew it onward continually. I walked there pondering till a noise from over the sea made me turn and look that way; what was that coming over the sea? Laus Deo! the WEST WIND: Hurrah! I feel the joy I felt then over again now, in all its intensity. How came it over the sea? first out to sea, so that it was only just visible under the red-gleaming moonlight, far out to sea, while the mists above grew troubled, and wavered, a long level bar of white; it grew nearer quickly, it rushed on toward me fearfully fast, it gathered form, strange, misty, intricate form—the ravelled foam of the green sea; then oh! hurrah! I was wrapped in it—the cold salt spray—drenched with it, blinded by it, and when I could see again, I saw the great green waves rising, nodding and breaking, all coming on together; and over them from wave to wave leaped the joyous WEST WIND; and the mist and the plague clouds were sweeping back eastward in wild swirls; and right away were they swept at last, till they brooded over the face of the dismal stagnant meres, many miles away from our fair city, and there they pondered wrathfully on their defeat.

"But somehow my life changed from the time when I beheld the two lovers, and I grew old quickly." He ceased; then after a short silence said again; "And that was long ago, very long ago, I know not when it happened."

So he sank back again, and for a while no one spoke; till Giles said at last:

"Once in full daylight I saw a vision, while I was waking, while the eyes of men were upon me; long ago on the afternoon of a thunderous summer day, I sat alone in my fair garden near the city; for on that day a mighty reward was to be given to the brave man who had saved us all, leading us so mightily in that battle a few days back; now the very queen, the lady of the land, whom all men reverenced almost as the Virgin Mother, so kind and good and beautiful she was, was to crown him with flowers and gird a sword about him; after the 'Te Deum' had been sung for the victory, and almost all the city were at that time either in the Church, or hard by it, or else were by the hill that was near the river where the crowning was to be: but I sat alone in the garden of my house as I said; sat grieving for the loss of my brave brother, who was slain by my side in that same fight.

"I sat beneath an elm tree; and as I sat and pondered on that still, windless day, I heard suddenly a breath of air rustle through the boughs of the elm. I looked up, and my heart almost stopped beating, I knew not why, as I watched the path of that breeze over the bowing lilies and the rushes by the fountain; but when I looked to the place whence the breeze had come, I became all at once aware of an appearance that told me why my heart stopped beating. Ah! there they were, those two whom before I had but seen in dreams by night, now before my

waking eyes in broad daylight. One, a knight (or so he seemed), with long hair mingled with golden threads, flowing over his mail-coat, and a bright crestless helmet on his head, his face sad-looking, but calm; and by his side, but not touching him, walked a wondrously fair maiden, clad in white, her eyelids just shadowing her blue eyes: her arms and hands seeming to float along with her as she moved on quickly, yet very softly; great rest on them both, though sorrow gleamed through it.

"When they came opposite to where I stood, these two stopped for a while, being in nowise shadowy, as I have heard men say ghosts are, but clear and distinct. They stopped close by me, as I stood motionless, unable to pray; they turned to each other, face to face, and the maiden said, 'Love, for this our last true meeting before the end of all, we need a witness; let this man, softened by sorrow, even as we are, go with us.'

"I never heard such music as her words were; though I used to wonder when I was young whether the angels in heaven sung better than the choristers sang in our church, and though, even then the sound of the triumphant hymn came up to me in a breath of wind, and floated round me, making dreams, in that moment of awe and great dread, of the old long-past days in that old church, of her who lay under the pavement of it; whose sweet voice once, long ago, once only to me—yet I shall see her again." He became silent as he said this, and no man cared to break in upon his thoughts, seeing the choking movement in his throat, the fierce clenching of hand and foot, the stiffening of the muscles all over him; but soon, with an upward jerk of his head, he threw back the long elf locks that had fallen over his eyes while his head was bent down, and went on as before:

"The knight passed his hand across his brow, as if to clear away some mist that had gathered there, and said, in a deep murmurous voice, 'Why the last time, dearest, why the last time? Know you not how long a time remains yet? the old man came last night to the ivory house and told me it would be a hundred years, ay, more, before the happy end.' 'So long,' she said: 'so long; ah! love, what things words are; yet this is the last time; alas! alas! for the weary years! my words, my sin!' 'O love, it is very terrible,' he said, 'I could almost weep, old though I am, and grown cold with dwelling in the ivory house: O, Ella, if you only knew how cold it is there, in the starry nights when the north wind is stirring; and there is no fair colour there, nought but the white ivory, with one narrow line of gleaming gold over every window, and a fathom's-breadth of burnished gold behind the throne. Ella, it was scarce well done of you to send me to the ivory house.' 'Is it so cold, love?' she said, 'I knew it not; forgive me! but as to the matter of a witness, some one we must have, and why not this man?' 'Rather old Hugh,' he said, 'or Cuthbert, his father; they have both been witnesses before.' 'Cuthbert,' said the maiden, solemnly, 'has been dead twenty years; Hugh died last night.'" (Now, as Giles said these words, carelessly, as though not heeding them particularly, a cold sickening shudder ran through the other two men, but he

noted it not and went on.) " 'This man then be it,' said the knight, and therewith they turned again, and moved on side by side as before; nor said they any word to me, and yet I could not help following them, and we three moved on together, and soon I saw that my nature was changed, and that I was invisible for the time; for, though the sun was high, I cast no shadow, neither did any man that we passed notice us, as we made toward the hill by the riverside.

"And by the time we came there the queen was sitting at the top of it, under a throne of purple and gold, with a great band of knights gloriously armed on either side of her; and their many banners floated over them. Then I felt that those two had left me, and that my own right visible nature was returned; yet still did I feel strange, and as if I belonged not wholly to this earth. And I heard one say, in a low voice to his fellow, 'See, sir Giles is here after all; yet, how came he here, and why is he not in armour among the noble knights yonder, he who fought so well? how wild he looks too!' 'Poor knight,' said the other, 'he is distraught with the loss of his brother; let him be; and see, here comes the noble stranger knight, our deliverer.' As he spoke, we heard a great sound of trumpets, and therewithal a long line of knights on foot wound up the hill towards the throne, and the queen rose up, and the people shouted; and, at the end of all the procession, went slowly and majestically the stranger knight; a man of noble presence he was, calm, and graceful to look on; grandly he went amid the gleaming of their golden armour; himself clad in rent mail and tattered surcoat he had worn on the battle-day; bare-headed, too; for, in that fierce fight, in the thickest of it, just where he rallied our men, one smote off his helmet, and another, coming from behind, would have slain him, but that my lance bit into his breast.

"So, when they had come within some twenty paces of the throne, the rest halted, and he went up by himself toward the queen; and she, taking the golden-hilted sword in her left hand, with her right caught him by the wrist, when he would have knelt to her, and held him so, tremblingly, and cried out, 'No, no, thou noblest of all knights, kneel not to me; have we not heard of thee even before thou camest hither? how many widows bless thee, how many orphans pray for thee, how many happy ones that would be widows and orphans but for thee, sing to their children, sing to their sisters, of thy flashing sword, and the heart that guides it! And now, O noble one! thou hast done the very noblest deed of all, for thou hast kept grown men from weeping shameful tears! Oh truly! the greatest I can do for thee is very little; yet, see this sword, golden-hilted, and the stones flash out from it,' (then she hung it round him) 'and see this wreath of lilies and roses for thy head; lilies no whiter than thy pure heart, roses no tenderer than thy true love; and here, before all these my subjects, I fold thee, noblest, in my arms, so, so.' Ay, truly it was strange enough! those two were together again; not the queen and the stranger knight, but the young-seeming knight and the maiden I had seen in the garden. To my eyes they clung together there; though they say, that to the eyes of all else, it was but

for a moment that the queen held both his hands in hers; to me also, amid the shouting of the multitude, came an under current of nappy song: 'Oh! truly, very truly, my noblest, a hundred years will not be long after this.' 'Hush! Ella, dearest, for talking makes the time speed; think only.'

"Pressed close to each other, as I saw it, their bosoms heaved—but I looked away—alas! when I looked again, I saw nought but the stately stranger knight, descending, hand in hand, with the queen, flushed with joy and triumph, and the people scattering flowers before them.

"And that was long ago, very long ago." So he ceased; then Osric, one of the two younger men, who had been sitting in awe-struck silence all this time, said, with eyes that dared not meet Giles', in a terrified half whisper, as though he meant not to speak, "How long?" Giles turned round and looked him full in the face, till he dragged his eyes up to his own, then said, "More than a hundred years ago."

"So they all sat silent, listening to the roar of the south-west wind; and it blew the windows so, that they rocked in their frames.

"Then suddenly, as they sat thus, came a knock at the door of the house; so Hugh bowed his head to Osric, to signify that he should go and open the door; so he arose, trembling, and went.

"And as he opened the door the wind blew hard against him, and blew something white against his face, then blew it away again, and his face was blanched, even to his lips; but he, plucking up heart of grace, looked out, and there he saw, standing with her face upturned in speech to him, a wonderfully beautiful woman, clothed from her throat till over her feet in long white raiment, ungirt, unbroidered, and with a veil, that was thrown off from her face, and hung from her head, streaming out in the blast of the wind; which veil was what had struck against his face: beneath her veil her golden hair streamed out too, and with the veil, so that it touched his face now and then. She was very fair, but she did not look young either, because of her statue-like features. She spoke to him slowly and queenly: 'I pray you give me shelter in your house for an hour, that I may rest, and so go on my journey again.' He was too much terrified to answer in words, and so only bowed his head; and she swept past him in stately wise to the room where the others sat, and he followed her, trembling.

"A cold shiver ran through the other men when she entered and bowed low to them, and they turned deadly pale, but dared not move; and there she sat while they gazed at her, sitting there and wondering at her beauty, which seemed to grow every minute, though she was plainly not young, oh no, but rather very, very old, who could say how old? there she sat, and her long, long hair swept down in one curve from her head, and just touched the floor. Her face had the tokens of a deep sorrow on it, ah! a mighty sorrow, yet not so mighty as that it might mar her ineffable loveliness; that sorrow-mark seemed to gather too, and at last the gloriously-slow music of her words flowed from her lips: 'Friends, has one with the appearance of a youth come here lately; one with long brown hair,

interwoven with threads of gold, flowing down from out of his polished steel helmet; with dark blue eyes and high white forehead, and mail-coat over his breast, where the light and shadow lie in waves as he moves; have you seen such an one, very beautiful?'

"Then withal as they shook their heads fearfully in answer, a great sigh rose up from her heart, and she said: 'Then must I go away again presently, and yet I thought it was the last night of all.'

"And so she sat awhile with her head resting on her hand; after, she arose as if about to go, and turned her glorious head round to thank the master of the house; and they, strangely enough, though they were terrified at her presence, were yet grieved when they saw that she was going.

"Just then the wind rose higher than ever before, yet through the roar of it they could all hear plainly a knocking at the door again; so the lady stopped when she heard it, and turning, looked full in the face of Herman the youngest, who thereupon, being constrained by that look, rose and went to the door; and as before with Osric, so now the wind blew strong against him; and it blew into his face, so as to blind him, tresses of soft brown hair mingled with glittering threads of gold; and blinded so, he heard some one ask him musically, solemnly, if a lady with golden hair and white raiment was in that house: so Herman, not answering in words, because of his awe and fear, merely bowed his head; then he was 'ware of some one in bright armour passing him, for the gleam of it was all about him, for as yet he could not see clearly, being blinded by the hair that had floated about him.

"But presently he followed him into the room, and there stood such an one as the lady had described; the wavering flame of the light gleamed from his polished helmet, touched the golden threads that mingled with his hair, ran along the rings of his mail.

"They stood opposite to each other for a little, he and the lady, as if they were somewhat shy of each other after their parting of a hundred years, in spite of the love which they had for each other: at last he made one step, and took off his gleaming helmet, laid it down softly, then spread abroad his arms, and she came to him, and they were clasped together, her head lying over his shoulder; and the four men gazed, quite awe-struck.

"And as they gazed, the bells of the church began to ring, for it was New Year's Eve; and still they clung together, and the bells rang on, and the old year died.

"And there beneath the eyes of those four men the lovers slowly faded away into a heap of snow-white ashes. Then the four men kneeled down and prayed, and the next day they went to the priest, and told him all that had happened.

"So the people took those ashes and buried them in their church, in a marble tomb, and above it they caused to be carved their figures lying with clasped hands; and on the sides of it the history of the cave in the red pike."

The Doctor

CHAPTER I

THE CALL

ACCOMPANIED by a taciturn policeman, the Doctor went through empty streets where the wet pavement reflected his long figure as in a dim, broken glass. Behind the walls bare boughs were tossing in the wind that howled round iron roofs and dashed icy raindrops like splinters in the face. When for a short while its fury abated and there was silence, a sound of distant firing could be distinctly heard; rifle-shots, singly, and then again in rapid succession. Southwards, behind the dark shadow of the cathedral there was a faint glow which lit up the low hanging clouds, making them look like huge dun-coloured reptiles.

"Whereabouts are they shooting?" asked the Doctor, thrusting his hands up his sleeves and looking down at his feet.

"That I don't know," replied the policeman, but from the tone of his voice the Doctor perceived that he knew and would not say.

"Is it on the outskirts of the town?" persisted the Doctor, clenching his teeth with rage.

"I don't know, I'm sure," said the man in the same tone. "We really must go faster, sir."

"What a damned idiot!" thought the Doctor, quickening his pace.

Again the wind blew in gusts; and again, when there was a lull, the same distant sound of firing was audible.

"But who shot the Chief Constable?" asked the Doctor, as he listened anxiously to the firing.

"One of those Jews, probably," replied the policeman in the same callous tone.

"With what?"

"With a revolver. He shot and wounded him."

"Why?"

"That I don't know."

This curt, monotonous reply made all further questioning futile. The Doctor literally felt as if his fury would choke him. He was convinced that the Police Superintendent had been wounded by one of a Jewish gang, a secret Self-Defence Society, upon which the Cossacks had been ordered to fire. He pictured to himself a disorderly band of terrified men, powerless and badly armed, who were being gradually massacred with pitiless precision. So revolting to him was the scene, and so clearly did he seem to see it, that he longed to stop suddenly and say to the policeman roughly:

"Well, let him die like a dog! A dog deserves a dog's death!"

But he managed to control himself.

"I have no right to behave like that," he thought. "I am a doctor, not a judge." Although this reason seemed irrefutable, he furthermore reflected, "Besides, one can't hit a man that's down."

The policeman walked close behind him, and to be followed by this black, monotonous figure became at last intolerable.

"I think they might have sent me horses," he said at last. His voice trembled, and he was amazed at having made such a foolish protest.

"The horses are all engaged. In the town they are looking everywhere for doctors. I hoped to be able to fetch you in a droshky, sir, but there's not a damned one to be got. We must go a bit quicker, sir!"

CHAPTER II

THE PLEA

Several policemen and two mounted Cossacks were stationed in front of the Chief Constable's house. The horses tossed their heads, and their tails were blown sideways by the wind. With their rifles slung across their saddles, the Cossacks sat there motionless, each looking as if he were not a living man but an inanimate part of the horse. As the Doctor approached, the policeman silently made way for him. A sergeant in a grey cloak saluted and asked:

"What about the doctor? Have you got one?"

"Yes, I've got one," was the policeman's triumphant answer, as he ran forward and opened the door.

"This way, if you please, sir!"

The hall was in darkness, but from a side-room a streak of light fell across the floor. A fat inspector came out of this room, in which other policemen and a smart-looking young officer could be seen.

"Well, have you got a doctor?" asked the police-sergeant.

"Yes," replied the sergeant in the grey cloak.

The Doctor said nothing, but frowned as one who, perplexed and helpless, had been suddenly involved in an unpleasant business and who saw no way out of it. For a long while he fidgeted with his muffler before taking off his overcoat and goloshes. Then he removed his glasses, which he proceeded to polish with his handkerchief with unnecessary slowness and deliberation.

Just at this moment he recollected how in his student-days he was once obliged to enter a house where shortly before he had received his *congé*, owing to some misunderstanding or other. How ashamed he felt! To walk almost caused him physical pain. Such were his sensations now. He coughed nervously, raised his eyebrows, looked over the rims of his glasses, and awkwardly entered the lighted room.

"Where is the patient?" he asked irritably, without looking at anyone. Indeed he strove to avoid the expectant glances directed towards him. He only saw that the officer of gendarmes was the same one who shortly before had searched his own house.

"This way, doctor! This way, please," said the Inspector hoarsely.

A graceful woman hurried forward, her feet becoming entangled in the folds of her dress. She had large black eyes that looked the larger for being tear-stained. Such was her beauty that the Doctor involuntarily looked at her in admiration and surprise.

"Platon Mikhailovitch, where is the doctor?" she asked in a voice choked with emotion.

"Here is the doctor, Emma Vasilievna! Calm yourself! It will be all

right now, and we shall manage to set him on his feet," said the Inspector in that kindly, familiar tone which stalwart men often adopt when speaking to beautiful women.

Seizing the doctor by both hands, she looked him full in the face with wide-opened eyes and said:

"For God's sake, doctor, help me! This way, quick! He's in such a shocking state. They've wounded him in the stomach. Oh, do come!"

Then she began to sob, covering her face with her soft, pink hands.

"Emma Vasilievna, don't distress yourself like that! There's no need for it!" cried the burly Inspector, with a deprecative gesture.

"Pray be calm, madam," added the Doctor gently, being softened, now, by pity. Yet, as he spoke, he glanced at her hands and remembered what some one had told him that very day—told him how they had ripped up pregnant Jewesses and stuffed them with feathers from their bedding. . . .

"Why did you not send for some other medical man?" he asked in an undertone, without looking up.

Her eyes flashed in surprise. "My God, who else is there that we could have summoned? You are the only Russian doctor in the whole town. I could not have sent for a Jew. They are all so bitterly hostile to him! Oh, Doctor!"

The Inspector came nearer, and the Doctor understood why he moved. He looked round angrily, blinking his little eyes. "Very well, then; where is the patient?"

"Here, here, Doctor!" exclaimed the lady, as she caught up her gown and hurriedly offered to lead the way.

"Perhaps you will want help," suggested the Inspector.

"I want nobody," replied the Doctor sharply, glad of an opportunity to be rude. He quickly followed the lady through two dark rooms, presumably the dining-room and the *salon*, for the Doctor fancied he could see a white table on which a tea-urn still stood, pictures, a grand piano, dark, yet gleaming in the dusk, and large mirrors. They walked alternately on polished flooring and soft carpets. Everywhere there was the strange, indefinable aroma of wealth and luxury which the Doctor found intolerably oppressive. He could now hear a sound that was familiar to him, the laboured, stertorous breathing of a dying man, and this impressed upon him the fact that he had a duty to perform.

It was he who now walked first and entered the sick-room. It smelt strongly of sal-ammoniac and iodoform. A Red Cross Sister of Mercy was standing beside the bed, and on the blood-stained mattress, at full length, with his chest curiously thrust out, lay the Chief Constable. His blue trousers were unbuttoned, and had been drawn down, disclosing his naked stomach, which heaved convulsively.

The Doctor looked sternly at his patient and said:

"Bring a light, please, Sister!"

But the lady herself rushed to the table and brought the lamp. When the light fell on her it gave her eyes a lurid brilliance as she looked first at her prostrate husband, then at the Doctor's face like a terrified child.

The Doctor bent down. "Oh, it's there! I see," he muttered to himself.

Just below the ribs there was a little dark red hole. With two fingers he

cautiously pressed the edges of the wound, when the body became at once convulsed, and a wild, hideous scream came from somewhere at the back of the Doctor's elbow. Lamp in hand, the lady became so terribly agitated that instinctively the Doctor put out his hands to prevent her from falling. "She's going to faint," he thought.

"My dear lady," he said, "don't give way like this. I think you had better retire. You cannot do anything here." Thus persuading her, he at the same time took hold of her arm.

She stared at him, wild-eyed. "No, no! It's nothing, nothing! Oh, be quick, Doctor; for God's sake, be quick!"

But the Doctor firmly led her away, and she obediently left the room.

In the *salon* the maid lit a lamp, and in the soft light the polished surface of the furniture and the gilt frames of the pictures were dimly discernible. Almost forcibly the Doctor led the lady to a couch. The Inspector's round, red face peered in at the door.

"Don't come back, if you please. Stay here. The Sister of Mercy will be quite sufficient, and I am going to send for an assistant-surgeon at once. It is too much for you; so please stay here."

"We have already sent for the assistant-surgeon," said the Inspector in the doorway.

She listened, still gazing at the Doctor with her dark, shining eyes. It was as if there was something that she did not understand. Directly the Doctor moved, with cat-like swiftness she caught at his hand.

"Doctor, tell me, for God's sake, tell me the truth! There's no danger, is there? He's not going to die?" she faltered.

The Doctor felt more and more how terribly she was suffering, and his pity for her increased.

"Ah, well," he thought, as if replying to his own indefinite emotions, "every one for himself! This outrage is just as horrible as any other. Of course to her he is the dearest thing in the whole world, and he loves life as much as anybody else. It's my business to help all; not to look upon some patients as guilty, and upon others as innocent."

"Be calm, madam," he said kindly. "Please God, all will go well. The wound is certainly serious, but you have sent for me in good time. Yes; it is lucky that you did so," he added with emphasis.

Although the uncertainty was as great as ever, since he had done nothing so far, the wife's dark eyes grew softer. They no longer glittered feverishly but expressed heartfelt gratitude. She sank down, strengthless, on the couch.

"Thank you, doctor," she murmured. Her voice had a caressing quality. "Go back. I won't disturb you any more. But if . . . if . . . you'll call me, won't you, Doctor?"

Against his will the Doctor glanced once more at this enchanting vision of shimmering lace, raven black hair, roseate limbs, and rustling silk. "How beautiful she is!" he thought. "And she's the wife, the bedfellow of that brute! Strange, isn't it? But that's just how things are in this world!"

On entering the bedroom the Doctor closed the door. "Sister," he said to the Red Cross nurse seated beside the bed, "will you send for the assistant-surgeon, and to my house for my in-

struments? They'll know what I want. Or, perhaps I had better write a note."

"Very well, sir," replied the nurse, rising, "but that has been done already, I believe."

"And see to it," added the Doctor, "that no one comes in here. The patient requires rest. Do not admit his wife."

When left alone with the patient the Doctor carefully placed the lamp on a little table near the bed and sat down beside it. The Chief Constable still lay there without moving. His face with its heavy moustache, his hands with rings on the fingers, his legs in big varnished top-boots, were all equally motionless. Only the red, bare stomach heaved convulsively.

The Doctor knew what had to be done and what could be done. A single glance had sufficed to assure him that so robust a patient, despite the gravity of the wound, would recover if no complications set in, and if aid were given in time, so that, not unnaturally, he felt impatient. He took the patient's hand to feel his pulse. A powerful hand once, maybe, covered with reddish hair, but now as pliable as india-rubber. The heavy breathing suddenly ceased. The Doctor looked intently at the patient and perceived that he was recovering consciousness.

"Well, how do you feel?" he asked.

The Chief Constable did not reply. As before, his stomach rose and fell, and his eyes through their half-closed lids had a dull, lifeless expression.

The Doctor began to think that he must have been mistaken, when just at that moment the moustache quivered and a strange voice, coming as it were from depths within the patient's body, said gently and distinctly, "It hurts me . . . Doctor. . . I am dying. . . . Where is Emma . . . my wife?"

"I have sent your wife away. It is too much for her. You won't die. There's not the least fear of that. You'll be all right," said the Doctor in the calm tone of assurance that he always adopted when addressing patients.

"It hurts me!" repeated the Chief Constable in a fainter voice, and he sighed.

"Never mind! We shall soon put that right. You must have a little patience," replied the Doctor in the same soothing tone. But his patient had become unconscious again, and it was distressing to hear his laboured breathing beneath his tawny moustache.

The Doctor looked at the clock, sighed, and then rose. The wound had been washed by the Sister of Mercy, and for the moment nothing could be done. He became more and more uneasy as he sat there in this heated atmosphere, a prey to vague, gloomy thoughts. He went to the window and, opening the small one, looked down at the street. The fresh air as it came in and touched his forehead was reviving. The street was empty and silent. Then, as he, listening, looked out again the distant sound of firing came to him on the wind.

. . . Bang! . . . Bang bang! . . . Bang!

"My God! When on earth will it stop?" he muttered.

As if in reply, he heard the hoarse gurgling of the patient in the room behind him. "This fellow," thought he, "what a beautiful, charming wife he's got! He's strong and healthy. and

surrounded with comfort of every kind. His children, too, are healthy, happy children, no doubt. But instead of being content with such good fortune, instead of enjoying his life and prizing the joy that was his, he must needs do such atrocious things! For him such hideous deeds are utterly unnecessary and uncalled for. He must know what misery they cause. And yet, in spite of it all . . ."

The wind howled more furiously; and again from the bed came the sound of laboured breathing.

The Doctor listened anxiously. He fancied that he could hear a scream as he looked right and left through the small window opening on to the street. Immediately opposite he could read on a large white signboard the words *Fish Depot.* Suddenly he recollected how some six or seven months ago he had been summoned to attend a tradesman who was suffering from a slight paralytic stroke. The fat fellow lay on the sofa like a sow that had just been slaughtered. His face was blue as that of a corpse; he was gasping for breath; and every now and then his limbs twitched convulsively. At the time the Doctor did everything that was possible, sitting up all night with the patient, and eventually effecting a cure. Now, it was this very same tradesman, Voskoboynikof by name, who three days ago had collected a horde of drunken wretches who could hardly be called men, and, after treating them all to vodka, had distributed red flags among them. His fat, red face shone with excitement as he spluttered out a lot of senseless words that had now resulted in all these bestial outrages and inhuman massacres.

"There it is!" thought the Doctor. "If I hadn't cured him when I did, dozens and dozens of poor wretches might now be alive! Why did I ever do it?"

He left the window, perplexed and confused, as if trying vainly to recollect something. Going to the bedside, he scrutinized the pale, motionless face of his patient. At times, if the breathing grew more laboured, broad white teeth became visible beneath the reddish moustache; and then the whole countenance assumed a cunning expression as that of a wild beast. A wave of fury and disgust came over the Doctor as he watched.

"I must control myself," he thought. "I have no right to let myself be influenced by personal feelings. It stands to reason that I could not possibly go away and leave a dying man. Yet why not! Why shouldn't I leave him to die? No, no! Impossible!" The note of assurance rang false, emphatic though it was. "Damn it all!" he thought angrily. "What does it mean? Why doesn't somebody come?" Then he perceived that he really only desired "somebody" to come in order to counteract his own personal aversion, and to enable him to overcome it.

For some reason or other he felt drawn to look out of the window again. Gazing into the darkness, he seemed to see once more a hideous sight that he had witnessed a day or two ago. The corpse of a young man had been brought into the hospital. The face was so horribly mutilated that identification seemed impossible. It was one huge grisly clot of blood and mire, with tufts on it of soft, fair hair. Then he remembered a girl student, a little Jew-

ess whom he used to meet almost every morning when on his way to the hospital. She was a bright, graceful girl, and her neat brown dress, black apron, high boots, and glossy hair gave her a charming appearance. For the jaded physician it was refreshing to encounter this sweet embodiment of youth, as sweet to him as the first bright vision of spring. She, too, had been murdered. Her body was the second that he had seen on that fateful day. In a certain street, not far from a smoking house of which the door and windows had been battered in, amid the dirt and wreckage on the roadway, he had observed a strange white object. Having outraged her, the pillagers had stripped her stark naked and flung her out of the window, where, as the Doctor afterwards learnt, she had dragged herself along through the dirt on one leg. Her little breasts had been cut by the sharp stones. Her dishevelled hair was stiff and caked with mud. One white leg, broken and useless, lay bent beneath her on the stones.

Tears for the first time now rose to his eyes, wetting the rims of his glasses. Suddenly this awful picture, as in some hideous dream, gave place to that of Voskoboynikof's bloated, shapeless visage with its bloodshot, goggling eyes and gaping mouth ringed by a horde of ruffians, maddened by vodka and lust.

"No, they are not human beings!" he said aloud, composed now, and in a tone of conviction.

The face of the murdered girl had disappeared.

Once more he left the window and went back towards the patient's bedside. but as soon as he got to the middle of the room he turned sharply on his heel, and, without looking at the patient, waved his hand deprecatingly and went out.

"I cannot!" he said sorrowfully.

CHAPTER III

THE FLIGHT

In the *salon* he collided with the Sister of Mercy, and stood aside to let her pass. He was then in a strange, half-unconscious condition, and later on had no recollection of what at that moment was passing through his mind. The Sister stopped and said reassuringly, as she looked up in his face:

"They have sent again, sir, to Timopheief and to the hospital."

The Doctor looked at her brow pensively, where little fluffy hairs were peeping out from under her white cap. Then he said:

"Oh, yes, yes!"

"Perhaps you want water or something? Shall I get some water?" she asked.

"Yes, yes, water! Of course," shouted the Doctor furiously, amazed at such an outburst on his part. For an instant he saw the look of astonishment on the Sister of Mercy's face. She was evidently offended. He wanted to speak, to offer some explanation of his conduct, but he could only wave his hand feebly as he went out. Through all the rooms he walked, conscious that the Chief Constable's wife was watching him in amazement and distress, though as she rose from the couch he did not see her. On reaching the ante-room he began to put on his overcoat with trembling hands. She fol-

lowed him thither as with outstretched arms she exclaimed anxiously:

"Where are you going, Doctor? What is the matter?"

Behind her, his hands awkwardly extended, stood the Inspector, while above his head the face of the young officer could be seen. Then the Doctor, who had already put on his coat and goloshes, turned back, hat in hand, and went into the dining-room. He was very pale, and with his eyes fixed on the floor he said: "I cannot. . . . You had better call in some one else. . . ."

Her dark eyes grew wide with fear as she clasped her hands. "Doctor, what is the matter with you? Who is there that I can call in? As I have already told you, we've sent everywhere. You are the only one. . . . What does it mean? Are you not well yourself?"

The Doctor uttered a stifled cry, for the words in answer momentarily failed him. "Ugh! . . . Not at all! I am well . . . I am perfectly well!" he exclaimed testily, trembling all over.

A death-like pallor overspread her features. She gazed at him in mute amazement. Her silence and her glassy stare told him that she had understood.

"What does this mean, Doctor?" began the young officer in a hectoring tone. But she held him back.

"You won't save my husband because he . . ." Her lips quivered. Her voice was almost inaudible.

"Yes!" This was the curt reply that the Doctor had intended to give. But the little word stuck in his throat. He merely shrugged his shoulders, and his fingers twitched.

"Look here, sir, what . . ." cried the Inspector angrily. Then, for some reason or other, he stopped, and looked about him in confusion.

There was a brief silence. The lady gazed despairingly at the Doctor, who kept his eyes stubbornly fixed on one of the little feet of the table.

"Doctor!" she pleaded at last in a voice full of anguish.

He quickly looked up, but made no reply. Within him at that moment a painful, secret conflict was in progress. It seemed so utterly criminal and unjust to leave a dying man like this and to refuse to help her in her despair; to go away, and before going to condemn to death a helpless, suffering fellow-creature.

At this awful juncture he strove to find some outlet, some way of escape. But there was none. At one moment it seemed that the simplest way for him would be to go back and give help and consolation. Then, in another instant, clear, obvious as justice itself, his duty appeared to be exactly the reverse He ought to go. To which prompting should he yield?

"Doctor!" she murmured in the same supplicating tone, as she came close to him and held out her arms.

Quite apart from and outside this train of thought, he suddenly reflected that he was getting warm in his thick overcoat, and might catch cold if he went out into the street. Then, it seemed to him as if he had already taken off his coat, and was at the bedside looking at that face with its tawny moustache and large white teeth.

"No; it's impossible!" he thought; and again before his mental vision there floated the hideous picture of the young

man's battered head and of the girl-student's naked limb. In his ears rang those words spoken by that man he knew: "They ripped them up and then stuffed them with feathers from the bedding." A paroxysm of wrath again assailed him and he cried hoarsely: "No, I cannot!"

Waving her aside, he went to the door, when she suddenly shrieked, and he stopped.

"You dare not go! It's your duty to stop and save my husband! I will denounce you! You shall suffer for this! Platon Mikhailovitch!"

The Inspector and the young officer with two policemen advanced, all ready at a word from the lady in her silks and laces, to seize him. Standing in front of him, her slender hands clenched and her eyes round and flashing, she leaned forward.

"You dare not!" she hissed. "Do you know, I will compel you by force to remain . . . !"

"Ivanof!" cried the Inspector, turning very red.

"Aha! Ivanof, indeed!" replied the Doctor in a strange, deliberate tone, as he relinquished his hold of the door-handle and faced her.

"You mean to threaten me, do you? Very well. If I act in this way it is because I have good reasons for doing so. I am obliged to stop, am I? Who says that, pray? Let me tell you that I am obliged to do nothing that disgusts me. Your husband is a brute, and if he is suffering—well, it's a pity he can't be made to suffer more. Why should I save him? Why should I save the life of a man who—Do you know what you are saying? You ought to be ashamed of yourself! How can you possibly plead for such a man? Ah! No, no! Let him die! Let him die like a dog! I won't move a finger to help him. Arrest me, if you like! We will soon see about that!"

His thin little voice rose almost to a scream, and his small myopic eyes twinkled defiantly. In this moment he tasted the sweetness of revenge. The vent for all his pent-up grief and impotent fury had been found. His features were contorted by a sardonic smile of which he was himself unconscious. In his anger he saw nothing of what was going on.

The lady in her laces tottered helplessly and almost fell. Her face became ghastly white and all traces of its beauty disappeared. Her lips quivered, as in mute despair she held out limp, supplicating hands.

"Doctor! Doctor!"

He stopped short in his tirade and looked at her in amazement, as if he had quite forgotten her presence.

"I . . . I know, Doctor . . ." she stammered, "but . . . Doctor . . . did he himself . . . actually . . .?"

"Ah, yet if he didn't that is no justification," he muttered.

"I know! I know! But now, Doctor, now he'll die!"

"Yes, but . . ." began the Doctor, growing angry again.

She cut him short, as she caught hold of his coat-sleeve. "Ah! Doctor, I love him, and I can't live without him. See how much I suffer, too! Oh Doctor, in the name of all the Saints! Have you no pity? . . . Our children . . ." Suddenly she fell on her knees.

"Emma Vasilievna! What are you

doing?" cried the Inspector and the officer, rushing forward. But she thrust them aside.

So strange and unlooked for was this attitude of hers that for a moment the Doctor staggered backwards. She crawled towards him on her knees as her rustling silk skirts trailed along the floor; and at the sight of this frail woman in her anguish the Doctor felt a sharp pang at his heart.

"Doctor! Doctor! For God's sake, stop!"

He was trembling in every limb, and for the space of a second he felt that he could not resist. But just then the Inspector seized his arm roughly, and in another access of fury he shook himself free and rushed to the door.

She seized his sleeve, shrieking, but, loosing her hold, fell down in a swoon on the floor, a rigid mass of rose-pink silk and tangled hair. They lifted her up, yet not before the Doctor, as he flung open the door, had caught a glimpse of her lying there, prone. They rushed after him, and the Inspector called out the soldiers. He could hear the tramp of their feet on the stairs below. Trembling, aghast, he clutched the banisters and fled, while rings of fire danced before his eyes.

The Negro Mate

CAPT. NED BLAKELY—that name will answer as well as any other fictitious one (for he was still with the living at last accounts, and may not desire to be famous)—sailed ships out of the harbor of San Francisco for many years. He was a stalwart, warm-hearted, eagle-eyed veteran, who had been a sailor nearly fifty years—a sailor from early boyhood. He was a rough, honest creature, full of pluck, and just as full of hard-headed simplicity, too. He hated trifling conventionalities — "business" was the word, with him. He had all a sailor's vindictiveness against the quips and quirks of the law, and steadfastly believed that the first and last aim and object of the law and lawyers was to defeat justice.

He sailed for the Chincha Islands in command of a guano ship. He had a fine crew, but his negro mate was his pet—on him he had for years lavished his admiration and esteem. It was Capt. Ned's first voyage to the Chinchas, but his fame had gone before him—the fame of being a man who would fight at the dropping of a handkerchief, when imposed upon, and would stand no nonsense. It was a fame well earned. Arrived in the islands, he found that the staple of conversation was the exploits of one Bill Noakes, a bully, the mate of a trading ship. This man had created a small reign of terror there. At nine o'clock at night, Capt. Ned, all alone, was pacing his deck in the starlight. A form ascended the side, and approached him. Capt. Ned said:

"Who goes there?"

"I'm Bill Noakes, the best man in the islands."

"What do you want aboard this ship?"

"I've heard of Capt. Ned Blakely.

and one of us is a better man than 'tother—I'll know which, before I go ashore."

"You've come to the right shop—I'm your man. I'll learn you to come aboard this ship without an *in*vite."

He seized Noakes, backed him against the mainmast, pounded his face to a pulp, and then threw him overboard.

Noakes was not convinced. He returned the next night, got the pulp renewed, and went overboard head first, as before. He was satisfied.

A week after this, while Noakes was carousing with a sailor crowd on shore, at noonday, Capt. Ned's colored mate came along, and Noakes tried to pick a quarrel with him. The negro evaded the trap, and tried to get away. Noakes followed him up; the negro began to run; Noakes fired on him with a revolver and killed him. Half a dozen sea captains witnessed the whole affair. Noakes retreated to the small after cabin of his ship, with two other bullies, and gave out that death would be the portion of any man that intruded there. There was no attempt made to follow the villains; there was no disposition to do it, and indeed very little thought of such an enterprise. There were no courts and no officers; there was no government; the islands belonged to Peru, and Peru was far away; she had no official representative on the ground; and neither had any other nation.

However, Capt. Ned was not perplexing his head about such things. They concerned him not. He was boiling with rage and furious for justice. At nine o'clock at night he loaded a double-barreled gun with slugs, fished out a pair of handcuffs, got a ship's lantern, summoned his quartermaster and went ashore.

He said:

"Do you see that ship there at the dock?"

"Ay-ay, sir."

"It's the Venus."

"Ay-ay, sir."

"You—you know *me*."

"Ay-ay, sir."

"Very well, then. Take the lantern. Carry it just under your chin. I'll walk behind you and rest this gun-barrel on your shoulder, p'inting forward—so. Keep your lantern well up, so's I can see things ahead of you good. I'm going to march in on Noakes—and take him—and jug the other chaps. If you flinch—well, you know *me*."

"Ay-ay, sir."

In this order they filed aboard softly, arrived at Noakes's den, the quartermaster pushed the door open, and the lantern revealed the three desperadoes sitting on the floor. Capt. Ned said:

"I'm Ned Blakely. I've got you under fire. Don't you move without orders—any of you. You two kneel down in the corner—faces to the wall—now. Bill Noakes, put these handcuffs on; now come up close. Quartermaster, fasten 'em. All right. Don't stir, sir. Quartermaster, put the key in the outside of the door. Now, men, I'm going to lock you two in; and if you try to burst through this door—well, you've heard of *me*. Bill Noakes, fall in ahead and march. All set. Quartermaster, lock the door."

Noakes spent the night on board Blakely's ship, a prisoner under strict guard. Early in the morning Capt. Ned called in all the sea-captains in the harbor and invited them, with nautical

ceremony, to be present on board his ship at nine o'clock to witness the hanging of Noakes at the yard arm!

"What! The man has not been tried."

"Of course he hasn't. But didn't he kill the nigger?"

"Certainly he did; but you are not thinking of hanging him without a trial?"

"Trial! What do I want to try him for, if he killed the nigger?"

"Oh, Capt. Ned, this will *never* do. Think how it will sound."

"Sound be hanged! *Didn't he kill the nigger?"*

"Certainly, certainly, Capt. Ned—nobody denies that—but—"

"Then I'm going to *hang* him, that's all. Everybody I've talked to talks just the same way you do. Everybody says he killed the nigger, everybody knows he killed the nigger, and yet every lubber of you wants him *tried* for it. I don't understand such bloody foolishness as that. *Tried!* Mind you, I don't object to trying him, if it's got to be done to give satisfaction; and I'll be there, and chip in and help, too; but put it off till afternoon—put it off till afternoon, for I'll have my hands middling full till after the burying—"

"Why, what do you mean? Are you going to hang him *any how*—and try him afterward?"

"Didn't I *say* I was going to hang him? I never saw such people as you. What's the difference? You ask a favor, and then you ain't satisfied when you get it. Before or after's all one—*you* know how the trial will go. He killed the nigger. Say—I must be going. If your mate would like to come to the hanging, fetch him along. I like him."

There was a stir in the camp. The captains came in a body and pleaded with Capt. Ned not to do this rash thing. They promised that they would create a court composed of captains of the best character; they would empanel a jury; they would conduct everything in a way becoming the serious nature of the business in hand, and give the case an impartial hearing and the accused a fair trial. And they said it would be murder, and punishable by the American courts if he persisted and hung the accused on his ship. They pleaded hard. Capt. Ned said:

"Gentlemen, I'm not stubborn and I'm not unreasonable. I'm always willing to do just as near right as I can. How long will it take?"

"Probably only a little while."

"And can I take him up the shore and hang him as soon as you are done?"

"If he is proven guilty he shall be hanged without unnecessary delay."

"If he's proven guilty. Great Neptune, *ain't* he guilty? This beats my time. Why you all *know* he's guilty."

But at last they satisfied him that they were projecting nothing underhanded. Then he said:

"Well, all right. You go on and try him and I'll go down and overhaul his conscience and prepare him to go—like enough he needs it, and I don't want to send him off without a show for hereafter."

This was another obstacle. They finally convinced him that it was necessary to have the accused in court. Then they said they would send a guard to bring him.

"No, sir, I prefer to fetch him myself—he don't get out of *my* hands.

Besides, I've got to go to the ship and get a rope, anyway."

The court assembled with due ceremony, empaneled a jury, and presently Capt. Ned entered, leading the prisoner with one hand and carrying a Bible and a rope in the other. He seated himself by the side of his captive and told the court to "up anchor and make sail." Then he turned a searching eye on the jury, and detected Noake's friends, the two bullies. He strode over and said to them confidentially:

"You're here to interfere, you see. Now you vote right, do you hear?—or else there'll be a double-barreled inquest here when this trial's off, and your remainders will go home in a couple of baskets."

The caution was not without fruit. The jury was a unit—the verdict, "Guilty."

Capt. Ned sprung to his feet and said:

"Come along—you're my meat *now,* my lad, anyway. Gentlemen, you've done yourselves proud. I invite you all to come and see that I do it all straight. Follow me to the canyon, a mile above here."

The court informed him that a sheriff had been appointed to do the hanging, and—

Capt. Ned's patience was at an end. His wrath was boundless. The subject of a sheriff was judiciously dropped.

When the crowd arrived at the canyon, Capt. Ned climbed a tree and arranged a halter, then came down and noosed his man. He opened his Bible, and laid aside his hat. Selecting a chapter at random, he read it through, in a deep bass voice and with sincere solemnity. Then he said:

"Lad, you are about to go aloft and give an account of yourself; and the lighter a man's manifest is, as far as sin's concerned, the better for him. Make a clean breast, man, and carry a log with you that'll bear inspection. You killed the nigger?"

No reply. A long pause.

The captain read another chapter, pausing, from time to time, to impress the effect. Then he talked an earnest, persuasive sermon to him, and ended by repeating the question:

"Did you kill the nigger?"

No reply—other than a malignant scowl. The captain now read the first and second chapters of Genesis, with deep feeling—paused a moment, closed the book reverently, and said with a perceptible savor of satisfaction:

"There. Four chapters. There's few that would have took the pains with you that I have."

Then he swung up the condemned, and made the rope fast: stood by and timed him half an hour with his watch, and then delivered the body to the court. A little after, as he stood contemplating the motionless figure, a doubt came into his face; evidently he felt a twinge of conscience—a misgiving—and he said with a sigh:

"Well, p'raps I ought to burnt him, maybe. But I was trying to do for the best."

Lady Cardina

In the province of Cabar, in Asia, there once flourished two noble and magnificent cities, situated within ten leagues of each other, called Soriana and Belfiore. Jealous of their respective power and influence, they merely observed an external show of amity, and, though engaged in commercial intercourse, they never cordially united together. The people of Soriana being the most powerful of the two, frequently threatened the independence of those of Belfiore, and attempted by every means in their power to weaken and humiliate them. Well aware of their danger, the latter, rather than submit an inch of their dominions to the sovereignty of the Soriani, were prepared to throw themselves into the arms of the Christians or the Jews, and even to renounce the faith of their ancestors. Now, in the city of Belfiore there was a noble youth of the name of Gallio, who happened to be deeply enamoured of a young girl named Cardina, daughter of the great Marmoreo, who, strongly opposing the attachment of the young people, took measures to have the lover falsely accused and declared a rebel to the state. Immediately after his banishment, Gallio set out for the city of Soriana, and there learning that Marmoreo himself had been the author of his disgrace, stung with a feeling of resentment, he adopted the most subtle plans of revenge (inveighing bitterly against the father), all of which he as suddenly abandoned when he reflected upon the unaltered passion which he felt for the daughter.

At such times he would exclaim, "Oh, wretched, wretched Gallio! How dare I even imagine these means of revenge? —revenge at the expense of my beloved Cardina! To injure her father is to injure her—her whom I must ever worship and ever serve, though the daughter of my bitterest enemy! Oh, distraction! I am torn with contending duties; I am injured, and I burn for revenge; I love, and yet I am about to offend the object of my idolatry. For, alas! I must do it, or remain for ever dishonoured! Hath he not driven me forth as a rebel and a traitor from my native place? Yet thou, my love, my Cardina, wert not here to blame, for I fondly trust thou hast shed tears over my lot. When shall I behold thee—when return to Belfiore again? Oh, ye gods! that I could cease to think, cease to exist, under the cruel thoughts that rack me! For revenge ought to call louder than my love, and yet I know I can do nothing to displease her. Fester thy base heart, Marmoreo, that could conceive the foul and vindictive purpose of rendering me the veriest wretch that loads earth's weary bosom, weary of such monsters as thee!"

Gallio having thus resolved to abandon all measures of vengeance, absence and hopelessness had soon the effect of weakening his love. In the course of a year or two the image of Cardina ceased to haunt his fancy, but feelings of revenge and hatred, on the other hand, seemed to have usurped its place. She no longer continued to stand, like a good genius, between him and her father; and after revolving a thousand schemes of vengeance in his mind, he

resolved, in order to deprive his enemy both of his authority and his life, to attempt the subjugation of his countrymen under the yoke of the Soriani. With this view he made himself acquainted with a party whose secret object was to watch every opportunity of rendering themselves masters of Belfiore. The number appointed consisted of fifteen, and to these Gallio discovered his design of subjecting his native place, observing, at the same time, "I require of you nothing further than the power of disposing as I please of the persons of Marmoreo and Cardina: the one for the sake of vengeance; the other, I trust, to be treated in a kinder way." To this the confederates gave their ready consent, and the conspiracy was matured before the beginning of the ensuing year; while a number of persons, amounting to sixty, of Sorian families which had long resided at Belfiore, united with them, in order better to betray the place. Among these, Saladino, who had the command of the Porta Marina, was the most powerful, his family having enjoyed many lucrative offices of high trust in Belfiore during a period of nearly two hundred years. With him Gallio and his party arranged the manner in which they were to be admitted through the said gate; and at the appointed hour the whole force of the Soriani was secretly marched by night into the province of Belfiore. Gallio, having been intensely engaged during many days previous, allowing himself little time for sleep, devoted a few moments to repose before setting out on his final exploit, and tried to compose himself to rest. In this state of suspense the idea of Cardina naturally occurred to his mind: and the goddess of love attempting, from compassion, to counteract the influence of Mars and Saturn that so greatly predominated in him, presented her image in his slumbers, arrayed in more than her usual beauty, and with an expression of sorrow and tenderness in her countenance, while she seemed to say that her everlasting love and gratitude should be the reward of his forbearance, if he would consent to abandon his cruel and sanguinary designs. So vivid was the impression upon his mind, that, opening his arms as if to embrace her, he awoke, and found he had clasped only his sword that lay at his side. With a feeling of rage and disappointment, he felt inclined to turn it against his own bosom, so strongly had his dream affected him, and altered his previous resolution of persevering in his enterprise. His love for Cardina also seemed to acquire renewed strength; and recollecting every word and action of the vision, his desire of vengeance and all his bitter hatred against her father was forgotten as he burst into a passionate flood of tears. Then the hopes of mutual passion which she appeared to hold out to him in his dreams, and the expression of her grief and trouble, all combined to turn the tide of his feelings into a more loyal and patriotic course. Suddenly acting under the impulse of his change, he summoned his fellow-conspirators, exiles, like himself, from Belfiore, to a secret meeting, and proceeded to address them in the following words: "Fellow-citizens and brothers! Can it be true that we are about to destroy the place that gave us birth and to betray the city of our ancestors into the hands of her deadliest foes?

Let us pause ere we produce irreparable evils, that may call down on us the execration of posterity, by turning our arms against our native land, that ought to be directed against its enemies. Alas! how shall we bear to see the Soriani lords of us and of our countrymen, ourselves the worst of vassals! For let us not flatter ourselves that we shall reap other than the traitor's reward. Honour and treachery are yet in our power to choose. Fellow-citizens, which shall we embrace?" "Honour and our country!" exclaimed all with one voice. "Stay, hear me further," cried Gallio, taking advantage of the enthusiasm he had produced; "a messenger is just arrived, bringing me such tidings that, if you have heart to join me, we will return to our own city, but not without the glory of having first vanquished its enemies!" Inspired with the fervour of his patriotism, the whole of his companions promised to follow him whithersoever he would lead. "Then," cried Gallio, "let one of you attend me," and he selected the man he wished, "and let the rest await us here!" Having thus agreed upon the course they were to pursue, Gallio, along with his companion, affected to proceed with the scheme as before, and, under the pretence of an interview with Saladino, the governor of the Porta Marina, in order to fix upon the signals that were to be given for entering into the city of Belfiore, they proceeded forwards on horseback, until they reached Castel Fioralto, of which the governor, Parione, was one of the principal citizens, and strongly exasperated against the people of Soriana on account of their having cruelly slain his father; and with him they took further counsel about their plans. On his inquiring into the cause of their arrival, Gallio replied, "We are come to inform you that it is in our power either to destroy or make our city twice as powerful as it is, and as we are quite aware of your wishes, we shall reveal everything to you just as it occurred."

On hearing the particulars, Parione expressed his entire concurrence, and united in their plans with the utmost joy. Having matured these and sworn fidelity to each other, Parione, speedily mounting horse, took his leave, and arrived before sunset at Belfiore, where presenting himself before Patrioni, master of the palace where the seigniory held their sittings, he desired him to call a secret meeting of a hundred of the chief citizens of the place. This done, and the subject being proposed, it met with the general approbation of the whole assembly; and instantly closing all the gates and doubling the guards, they gave orders for the arrest of Saladino and the sixty conspirators, ready prepared for the undertaking. Upon being subjected to the question and confronted with Gallio, they made confession and were placed in strict confinement. The whole city, in the meantime, was put under arms and prepared for the reception of the force of the Soriani led on by Gallio. About two hours before daylight, the tramp of horse was heard approaching; and Saladino was compelled to open the gate, as had been agreed upon, at the appointed signals, betraying his party to destruction, on condition that his own and his children's lives should be spared; the whole of his family, in case of his failure, being involved in one common ruin. When the time approached, therefore, though

desirous of saving his own party, he opened the gates by command of Gallio, and the hostile force, led on by the chief citizens of Soriana, rushed forward into the city. Many of the leaders were richly armed and caparisoned, vieing with each other in the splendour of their appearance, and shining with gold and precious gems, ornaments in which their country abounded. Add to these, the great variety of burnished shields, lances, bows, and quivers, with dark plumes nodding in the air, and the flash of arms glittering through the moonlight. Thus proudly decorated are the Soriani accustomed to march forth to meet their enemies in the open field, the chief lords and gentlemen eagerly pressing forward in the van, leaving the least considerable of the citizens to bring up the rear. Marshalled, accordingly, in their best array, the Soriani now arrived at the Porta Marina, where, received by Saladino, they believed themselves upon the point of becoming masters of the city. By the advice of Gallio, they immediately marched forward and took possession of the cloister of Diana's temple, to the number of six thousand men, while three thousand were held in reserve in the temple of Mercury. Before daybreak, however, just as they imagined they were on the point of striking a decisive blow, they were startled by the loud clash of arms above them, and looking up, beheld crowds of armed men lining the walls of the great cloister of Diana, the chiefs of whom addressed the astonished Soriani with the cry of, "Yield, traitors, yield; or death to our prisoners!" at the same time showering down loads of burning combustibles upon their heads, so as to convince them they had not the least chance of escape. After some threats of rage and despair, the Soriani, finding every means of opposition useless, were induced to surrender, and threw down their arms. The whole of their rich equipage and all their golden ornaments became the spoil of their adversaries, while they were themselves led away in ranks of ten to be consigned to the gloomy dungeons of Sabar. Their great commander, Rabooth, who guarded the temple of Mercury with his three thousand soldiers, shortly afterwards met with the same fate, appealing only to the mercy of his victorious enemy. By the intercession of Gallio, he was pardoned on the following conditions: that he should make oath never again to enter into the city of Soriana or attempt anything against his victorious enemy. After making a solemn engagement to this effect, he was allowed to go free, and directly took his departure from the city, establishing his residence, with his companions, at Sarbonia, one hundred leagues from Soriana. The Belfioresi then returning in triumphal procession to the grand cloister of Diana, collected the spoils of their adversaries, and carried them afterwards to their palace-master, who appropriated them to the benefit of the community. They next proceeded to witness the execution of treacherous friends of Saladino, who had entered into terms with Gallio to betray their country, and who now were led forth into the large square to the number of sixty-five, all of whom were quartered alive. Over the heads of the traitor and his sons, whose lives were spared, was written in large letters the result of the invasion in the following manner: "We, the people of

Belfiore, have revenged ourselves upon our enemies by turning their arms against themselves; let the traitor Saladino bear witness to this. We send him and his children to you, with his companions, all of whom may be known by the tickets appended to their necks; the rest of the soldiers, for good reasons, we, the people of Belfiore, think proper to retain. Moreover we decree that in future no native of Soriana shall become resident in our city, or dare to assume the name of a Belfiorese, that he may no longer enjoy the advantage of betraying us, and of turning our hospitality into our ruin."

Along with this fatal proclamation were sent four cartloads filled with the dead bodies of their enemies, which reached about nightfall the gates of Soriana, whose inhabitants were expecting the arrival of their countrymen with a very different escort. Upon the return of the party to Belfiore, a grand tournament, with festivals of every kind, was proclaimed for the people, to be continued during a series of many weeks. Gallio, who had now greatly distinguished himself in the eyes of the Belfioresi, ordered a great feast in honour of the victory, and proceeded with a numerous party to wait upon Patrioni, grand-master of the palace, requesting an assemblage of the chief citizens, to which Marmoreo and his daughter Cardina should be invited. When met together, Gallio entered with a train of friends and nobles, and harangued them in the following words: "My honoured fathers, senators, and chiefs of bands! When I contemplate the singular degree of prudence, fortitude, temperance, and valour with which you have hitherto conducted your affairs, I bow to the decree that rendered me an unhappy exile from my native land. Nor am I here come to question the justice of the proceeding instituted against me by your learned and distinguished citizen, Marmoreo, though I still remain in ignorance of his motives. Rather would I accuse myself in having been so unfortunate as to draw down upon myself the weight of your displeasure; for which I do here humbly entreat your forgiveness, more especially in consideration of my tender age, not presuming to make other defence or set up any better excuse. And so far am I sensible of your high wisdom and authority and of my own slight deserts, that I am here ready to deliver myself up to your judgment once more, as a traitor to my country, and the author of the hateful and sacrilegious plot just attempted by your enemies. True, it was I, and I alone, who brought the whole secret power of Soriana into the bosom of your homes, who induced Saladino, with his fellow-traitors, on whom you had conferred your offices of trust and honour, to league with your foes in this nefarious design, and open to us your gates, that we might bring you under the yoke of Soriana, from which you are now fortunately for ever free. And let me caution you, before I yield my forfeit life, never in future to commit offices of trust or the command of gates to the Soriani, or to any other foreigners upon the face of the earth. It is enough to grant them passports through your dominions; but to make them governors over gates and citadels is the height of infatuation; for the love of country never becomes entirely obliterated from the human breast. Now, as

the unhappy cause of the great evil that had so nearly befallen the state, I surrender my person into your hands, entreating only, with my dying prayers, that the glory and triumph of our last noble enterprise may be wholly attributed to the youthful and beauteous Cardina, whose many virtues have produced, by their influence over my soul, the present happy result. It was she who snatched the patricidal sword out of my hand, who, when I was bent on the irretrievable destruction of her father and her friends, stood between us, like a guardian angel of peace, and with her tender and sorrowful aspect, her passionate tears, and sweet appeals to my love and honour, restored me to higher and better thoughts, pointing out to me the path of patriotic duty that I have since pursued. If, then, death be due to me as a traitor, to her let triumphal arches and honours befitting a queen be afforded; let her praises be sung over my obsequies; let her be called the saviour of Belfiore, and soothe my wounded spirit ere it take its final flight!" Here Gallio became silent, and kneeling in the midst of the council, he raised his hands, as if in prayer, while his eyes were bent upon the ground, and awaited in this attitude his sentence. The chiefs and elders of the city, imagining that Gallio would have closed his harangue by soliciting honours and rewards for his great services, having risen by his last exploit high in the estimation of all ranks, were surprised at such proofs of unfeigned humility and contrition, and began to consider him in a still nobler point of view than before. Mingled tears, congratulations, and applause followed the conclusion of his address. But the emotions of Cardina and her father, the author of all Gallio's sufferings, far surpassed those of any others present: the lady's tears flowed passionately and uncontrolled; her sobs drowned her voice when she attempted to intercede for him; while the more silent but deep and painful struggles of her father, torn as he was by the sense of ingratitude and remorse, produced a sensation of awe and trouble throughout the assembly. It was evident that the lovers had long been attached to each other; that he must have opposed their union by the most cruel and unjustifiable measures, and a feeling of compassion for both soon communicated itself to the people, who rushing forward with wild and tumultuous cries, demanded the head of Marmoreo, and declared Gallio their liege lord and prince. The chiefs and elders, yielding to the popular commotion, rose from their seats, and deputing one of their members to bear the ensigns of authority, they placed the gold staff in the hands of their new master. After a due degree of modest refusal and deference to the superior claims of the aged senators, Gallio was induced to accept the government of the state, and mounting the sovereign tribunal, in an harangue to the people expressed his gratitude for the high trust reposed in him. The people then becoming acquainted with his attachment to the Lady Cardina, unanimously insisted upon her taking her place as his bride-elect at his side, the sole condition upon which they consented to spare the life of the treacherous and cruel Marmoreo. The nuptials were accordingly soon after solemnised in the most splendid manner,

followed by every variety of games and jousts, and such exhibitions as were best adapted to gratify the taste of the people. Wherever Gallio made his appearance he was welcomed with the most enthusiastic shouts of applause as the beloved sovereign of his people; and he long continued lord of Belfiore, blest in the affections of the wise and beautiful Cardina, and esteemed for his equal administration of the laws. The season of these joyous festivals being over, it was resolved in council that the dungeons of Sabar should be blocked up on all sides, with the six thousand Sorian soldiers enclosed within, all of whom thus miserably perished. A herald was next despatched to summon the city of Soriana, which was soon compelled to send in its submission to Gallio, and was annexed to his dominions.

Alexander the Great

In one of those calm and gloomy days, which have a strange effect in disposing the mind to pensiveness, I quitted the busy town and withdrew into the country. As I passed towards the Schuylkill, my ideas enlarged with the prospect, and sprung from place to place with an agility for which nature hath not a simile. Even the eye is a loiterer, when compared with the rapidity of the thoughts. Before I could reach the ferry I had made the tour of the creation, and paid a regular visit to almost every country under the sun; and while I was crossing the river, I passed the Styx and made large excursions into the shadowy regions; but my ideas relanded with my person, and taking a new flight inspected the state of things unborn; this happy wildness of imagination makes a man a lord of the world, and discovers to him the value and vanity of all its passions. Having discharged the two terrestrial Charons, who ferried me over the Schuylkill, I took up my staff and walked into the woods. Everything comprised to hush me into a pleasing kind of melancholy, the trees seemed to sleep—and the air hung round me with such unbreathing silence, as if listening to my very thoughts. Perfectly at rest from care or business, I suffered my ideas to pursue their own unfettered fancies; and in less time than what is required to express it in, they had again passed the Styx and toured round many miles into the new country.

As the servants of great men always imitate their masters abroad, so my ideas, habiting themselves in my likeness, figured away with all the consequence of the person they belong to; and calling themselves, when united, *I* and *me* wherever they went, brought me, on their return, the following anecdotes of Alexander; viz.

Having a mind to see in what manner Alexander lived in the Plutonian world, I crossed the Styx (without the help of Charon, for the dead only are his fare,) and inquired of a melancholy looking shade who was sitting on the banks of the river, if he could give me any account of him: Yonder he comes, replied the shade, get out of the way, you'll be run over. Turning myself round I saw

a grand equipage rolling towards me which filled the whole avenue. Bless me! thought I, the gods still continue this man in his insolence and pomp! The chariot was drawn by eight horses in golden harness, and the whole represented his triumphal return, after he had conquered the world. It passed me with splendour I had not seen before, and shined so luminously up into the country, that I discovered innumerable shades sitting under the trees, which before were invisible. As there were two persons in the chariot equally splendid, I could not distinguish which was Alexander, and on requiring that information of the shade who still stood by, he replied, *Alexander is not there.* Did you not, continued I, tell me that Alexander was coming, and bid me get out of the way? Yes, answered the shade, *because he was the forehorse on the side next to us.* Horse! I mean Alexander the Emperor. *I mean the same,* replied the shade, *for whatever he was on the other side of the water is nothing now, he is a horse here; and not always that, for when he is apprehensive that a good licking is intended for him, he watches his opportunity to roll out of the stable in the shape of a piece of dung or in any other disguise he can escape in.* On this information I turned instantly away, not being able to bear the thoughts of such astonishing degradation, notwithstanding the aversion I have to his character. But curiosity got the better of my compassion, and having a mind to see what sort of a figure the conqueror of the world cut in the stable, I directed my flight thither. He was just returned with the rest of the horses from the journey, and the groom was rubbing him down with a large furze bush, but turning himself round to get a still larger and more prickly one that was newly brought in, Alexander catched the opportunity, and instantly disappeared, on which I quitted the place, lest I should be suspected of stealing him. When I had reached the banks of the river, and was preparing to take my flight over, I perceived that I had picked up a *bug* among the Plutonian gentry, and thinking it was needless to increase the breed on this side the water, was going to dispatch it, when the *little* wretch screamed out, *Spare Alexander the* GREAT. On which I withdrew the violence I was offering to his person, and holding up the emperor between my finger and thumb, he exhibited a most contemptible figure of the downfall of tyrant greatness. Affected with a mixture of concern and compassion (*which he was always a stranger to*) I suffered him to nibble on a pimple that was newly risen on my hand, in order to refresh him; after which I placed him on a tree to hide him, but a tom-tit coming by, chopped him up with as little ceremony as he put whole kingdoms to the sword. On which I took my flight, reflecting with pleasure that I was not *Alexander the* GREAT.

The Visitor

THERE was in the palace of the world a king who was very desirous of seeing Khizr, the Angel of Light, and he would even say, "If there be any one who will show me Khizr, I will give him whatsoever he may wish." Now there was at that time a man poor of estate, and from the stress of his poverty he said to himself, "Let me go and speak to the king, that if he provide for me during three years, either I shall be dead, or the king will be dead, or he will forgive me my fault, or I shall on somewise win to escape, and in this way shall I make merry for a time." So he went to the king and spake these words to him. The king said, "An thou show him not, then I will kill thee," and that poor man consented. Then the king let give him much wealth and money, and the poor man took that wealth and money and went to his house. Three years he spent in merriment and delight, and he rested at ease till the term was accomplished. At the end of that time he fled and hid himself in a trackless place, and he began to quake for fear. Of a sudden he saw a personage with white raiment and shining face, who saluted him. The poor man returned the salutation, and the radiant being asked, "Why art thou thus sad?" But he gave no answer. Again the radiant being asked him and sware to him, saying, "Do indeed tell to me thy plight, that I may find thee some remedy." So that hapless one narrated his story from its beginning to its end, and the radiant being said, "Come, I will go with thee to the king, and I will answer for thee." So they arose.

Now the king wanted that hapless one, and while they were going some of the king's officers who were seeking met them, and they straightway seized the poor man and brought him to the king. Quoth the king, "Lo, the three years are accomplished; come now, and show me Khizr." The poor man said, "My king, grace and bounty are the work of kings —forgive my sin." Quoth the king, "I made a pact; till I have killed thee, I shall not have fulfilled it." And he looked to his chief vezír and said, "How should this be done?" Quoth the vezír, "This man should be hewn in many pieces and then hung up on butchers' hooks, that others may see and lie not before the king." Said that radiant being, "True spake the vezír;—all things return to their origin." Then the king looked to the second vezír and said, "What sayest thou?" He replied, "This man should be boiled in a cauldron." Said that radiant being, "True spake the vezír;—all things return to their origin." The king looked to the third vezír and said, "What sayest thou?" The vezír replied, "This man should be hewn in small pieces and baked in an oven." Again said that elder, "True spake the vezír;—all things return to their origin." Then quoth the king to the fourth vezír, "Let us see what sayest thou?" The vezír replied, "O king, the wealth thou gavest this poor creature was for the love of Khizr. He, thinking to find him, accepted it; now that he has not found him he seeks pardon. This were befitting, that thou set free this poor creature for the love of Khizr." Said that elder, "True spake the vezír;—all things

return to their origin." Then the king said to the elder, "O elder, my vezírs have said different things contrary the one to the other, and thou hast said concerning each of them, 'True spake the vezír;—all things return to their origin.' What is the reason thereof?" That elder replied, "O king, thy first vezír is a butcher's son; therefore did he draw to his origin. Thy second vezír is a cook's son, and he likewise proposed a punishment as became his origin. Thy third vezír is a baker's son; he likewise proposed a punishment as became his origin. But thy fourth vezír is of gentle birth; compassion therefore becomes his origin, so he had compassion on that hapless one, and sought to do good and counselled liberation. O king, all things return to their origin." And he gave the king much counsel, and at last said, "Lo, I am Khizr," and vanished.

Sevastopol

The flush of morning has but just begun to tinge the sky above Sapun Mountain; the dark blue surface of the sea has already cast aside the shades of night and awaits the first ray to begin a play of merry gleams; cold and mist are wafted from the bay; there is no snow—all is black, but the morning frost pinches the face and crackles underfoot, and the far-off, unceasing roar of the sea, broken now and then by the thunder of the firing in Sevastopol, alone disturbs the calm of the morning. It is dark on board the ships; it has just struck eight bells.

Toward the north the activity of the day begins gradually to replace the nocturnal quiet; here the relief guard has passed clanking their arms, there the doctor is already hastening to the hospital, further on the soldier has crept out of his earth hut and is washing his sunburnt face in ice-encrusted water, and, turning towards the crimsoning east, crosses himself quickly as he prays to God; here a tall and heavy camel-wagon has dragged creaking to the cemetery, to bury the bloody dead, with whom it is laden nearly to the top. You go to the wharf—a peculiar odor of coal, manure, dampness, and of beef strikes you; thousands of objects of all sorts—wood, meat, gabions, flour, iron, and so forth—lie in heaps about the wharf; soldiers of various regiments, with knapsacks and muskets, without knapsacks and without muskets, throng thither, smoke, quarrel, drag weights aboard the steamer which lies smoking beside the quay; unattached two-oared boats, filled with all sorts of people,—soldiers, sailors, merchants women,—land at and leave the wharf.

"To the Grafsky, Your Excellency? be so good." Two or three retired sailors rise in their boats and offer you their services.

You select the one who is nearest to you, you step over the half-decomposed carcass of a brown horse, which lies there in the mud beside the boat, and reach the stern. You quit the shore. All about you is the sea, already glittering in the morning sun, in front of you is an aged sailor, in a

camel's-hair coat, and a young, white-headed boy, who work zealously and in silence at the oars. You gaze at the motley vastness of the vessels, scattered far and near over the bay, and at the small black dots of boats moving about on the shining azure expanse, and at the bright and beautiful buildings of the city, tinted with the rosy rays of the morning sun, which are visible in one direction, and at the foaming white line of the quay, and the sunken ships from which black tips of masts rise sadly here and there, and at the distant fleet of the enemy faintly visible as they rock on the crystal horizon of the sea, and at the streaks of foam on which leap salt bubbles beaten up by the oars; you listen to the monotonous sound of voices which fly to you over the water, and the grand sounds of firing, which, as it seems to you, is increasing in Sevastopol.

It cannot be that, at the thought that you too are in Sevastopol, a certain feeling of manliness, of pride, has not penetrated your soul, and that the blood has not begun to flow more swiftly through your veins.

"Your Excellency! you are steering straight into the Kistentin," says your old sailor to you as he turns round to make sure of the direction which you are imparting to the boat, with the rudder to the right.

"And all the cannon are still on it," remarks the white-headed boy, casting a glance over the ship as we pass.

"Of course; it's new. Korniloff lived on board of it," said the old man, also glancing at the ship.

"See where it has burst!" says the boy, after a long silence, looking at a white cloud of spreading smoke which has suddenly appeared high over the South Bay, accompanied by the sharp report of an exploding bomb.

"*He* is firing to-day with his new battery," adds the old man, calmly spitting on his hands. "Now, give way, Mishka! we'll overtake the barge." And your boat moves forward more swiftly over the broad swells of the bay, and you actually do overtake the heavy barge, upon which some bags are piled, and which is rowed by awkward soldiers, and it touches the Grafsky wharf amid a multitude of boats of every sort which are landing.

Throngs of gray soldiers, black sailors, and women of various colors move noisily along the shore. The women are selling rolls, Russian peasants with samovars are crying hot sbiten; and here upon the first steps are strewn rusted cannon-balls, bombs, grape-shot, and cast-iron cannon of various calibers; a little further on is a large square, upon which lie huge beams, gun-carriages, sleeping soldiers; there stand horses, wagons, green guns, ammunition-chests, and stacks of arms; soldiers, sailors, officers, women, children, and merchants are moving about; carts are arriving with hay, bags, and casks; here and there Cossacks make their way through, or officers on horseback, or a general in a drosky. To the right, the street is hemmed in by a barricade, in whose embrasures stand some small cannon, and beside these sits a sailor smoking his pipe. On the left a handsome house with Roman ciphers on the pediment, beneath which stand soldiers and blood-stained litters —everywhere you behold the unpleasant signs of a war encampment. Your first impression is inevitably of the

most disagreeable sort. The strange mixture of camp and town life, of a beautiful city and a dirty bivouac, is not only not beautiful, but seems repulsive disorder; it even seems to you that every one is thoroughly frightened, and is fussing about without knowing what he is doing. But look more closely at the faces of these people who are moving about you, and you will gain an entirely different idea. Look at this little soldier from the provinces, for example, who is leading a troïka of brown horses to water, and is purring something to himself so composedly that he evidently will not go astray in this motley crowd, which does not exist for him; but he is fulfilling his duty, whatever that may be,—watering the horses or carrying arms,—with just as much composure, self-confidence, and equanimity as though it were taking place in Tula or Saransk. You will read the same expression on the face of this officer who passes by in immaculate white gloves, and in the face of the sailor who is smoking as he sits on the barricade, and in the faces of the working soldiers, waiting with their litters on the steps of the former club, and in the face of yonder girl, who, fearing to wet her pink gown, skips across the street on the little stones.

Yes! disenchantment certainly awaits you, if you are entering Sevastopol for the first time. In vain will you seek, on even a single countenance, for traces of anxiety, discomposure, or even of enthusiasm, readiness for death, decision,—there is nothing of the sort. You will see the tradespeople quietly engaged in the duties of their callings, so that, possibly, you may reproach yourself for superfluous raptures, you may entertain some doubt as to the justice of the ideas regarding the heroism of the defenders of Sevastopol which you have formed from stories, descriptions, and the sights and sounds on the northern side. But, before you doubt, go upon the bastions, observe the defenders of Sevastopol on the very scene of the defence, or, better still, go straight across into that house, which was formerly the Sevastopol Assembly House, and upon whose roof stand soldiers with litters,—there you will behold the defenders of Sevastopol, there you will behold frightful and sad, great and laughable, but wonderful sights, which elevate the soul.

You enter the great Hall of Assembly. You have but just opened the door when the sight and smell of forty or fifty seriously wounded men and of those who have undergone amputation—some in hammocks, the majority upon the floor—suddenly strike you. Trust not to the feeling which detains you upon the threshold of the hall; be not ashamed of having come to *look at* the sufferers, be not ashamed to approach and address them: the unfortunates like to see a sympathizing human face, they like to tell of their sufferings and to hear words of love and interest. You walk along between the beds and seek a face less stern and suffering, which you decide to approach, with the object of conversing.

"Where are you wounded?" you inquire, timidly and with indecision, of an old, gaunt soldier, who, seated in his hammock, is watching you with a good-natured glance, and seems to invite you to approach him. I say "you

ask timidly," because these sufferings inspire you, over and above the feeling of profound sympathy, with a fear of offending and with a lofty reverence for the man who has undergone them.

"In the leg," replies the soldier; but, at the same time, you perceive, by the folds of the coverlet, that he has lost his leg above the knee. "God be thanked now," he adds,—"I shall get my discharge."

"Were you wounded long ago?"

"It was six weeks ago, Your Excellency."

"Does it still pain you?"

"No, there's no pain now; only there's a sort of gnawing in my calf when the weather is bad, but that's nothing."

"How did you come to be wounded?"

"On the fifth bastion, during the first bombardment. I had just trained a cannon, and was on the point of going away, so, to another embrasure when *it* struck me in the leg, just as if I had stepped into a hole and had no leg."

"Was it not painful at the first moment?"

"Not at all; only as though something boiling hot had struck my leg."

"Well, and then?"

"And then—nothing; only the skin began to draw as though it had been rubbed hard. The first thing of all, Your Excellency, *is not to think at all.* If you don't think about a thing, it amounts to nothing. Men suffer from thinking more than from anything else."

At that moment, a woman in a gray striped dress and a black kerchief bound about her head approaches you.

She joins in your conversation with the sailor, and begins to tell about him, about his sufferings, his desperate condition for the space of four weeks, and how, when he was wounded, he made the litter halt that he might see the volley from our battery, how the grand-duke spoke to him and gave him twenty-five rubles, and how he said to him that he wanted to go back to the bastion to direct the younger men, even if he could not work himself. As she says all this in a breath, the woman glances now at you, now at the sailor, who has turned away as though he did not hear her and plucks some lint from his pillow, and her eyes sparkle with peculiar enthusiasm.

"This is my housewife, Your Excellency!" the sailor says to you, with an expression which seems to say, "You must excuse her. Every one knows it's a woman's way—she's talking nonsense."

You begin to understand the defenders of Sevastopol. For some reason, you feel ashamed of yourself in the presence of this man. You would like to say a very great deal to him, in order to express to him your sympathy and admiration; but you find no words, or you are dissatisfied with those which come into your head,—and you do reverence in silence before this taciturn, unconscious grandeur and firmness of soul, this modesty in the face of his own merits.

"Well, God grant you a speedy recovery," you say to him, and you halt before another invalid, who is lying on the floor and appears to be awaiting death in intolerable agony.

He is a blond man with pale, swollen face. He is lying on his back, with his left arm thrown out, in a position which is expressive of cruel suffering. His parched, open mouth with difficulty

emits his stertorous breathing; his blue, leaden eyes are rolled up, and from beneath the wadded coverlet the remains of his right arm, enveloped in bandages, protrude. The oppressive odor of a corpse strikes you forcibly, and the consuming, internal fire which has penetrated every limb of the sufferer seems to penetrate you also.

"Is he unconscious?" you inquire of the woman, who comes up to you and gazes at you tenderly as at a relative.

"No, he can still hear, but he's very bad," she adds, in a whisper: "I gave him some tea to-day,—what if he is a stranger, one must still have pity!—and he hardly tasted it."

"How do you feel?" you ask him.

The wounded man turns his eyeballs at the sound of your voice, but he neither sees nor understands you.

"There's a gnawing at my heart."

A little further on, you see an old soldier changing his linen. His face and body are of a sort of cinnamon-brown color, and gaunt as a skeleton. He has no arm at all; it has been cut off at the shoulder. He is sitting with a wide-awake air, he puts himself to rights; but you see, by his dull, corpse-like gaze, his frightful gauntness, and the wrinkles on his face, that he is a being who has suffered for the best part of his life.

On the other side, you behold in a cot the pale, suffering, and delicate face of a woman, upon whose cheeks plays a feverish flush.

"That's our little sailor lass who was struck in the leg by a bomb on the 5th," your guide tells you. "She was carrying her husband's dinner to him in the bastion."

"Has it been amputated?"

"They cut it off above the knee."

Now, if your nerves are strong, pass through the door on the left. In yonder room they are applying bandages and performing operations. There, you will see doctors with their arms blood-stained above the elbow, and with pale, stern faces, busied about a cot, upon which, with eyes widely opened, and uttering, as in delirium, incoherent, sometimes simple and touching words, lies a wounded man under the influence of chloroform. The doctors are busy with the repulsive but beneficent work of amputation. You see the sharp, curved knife enter the healthy, white body, you see the wounded man suddenly regain consciousness with a piercing cry and curses, you see the army surgeon fling the amputated arm into a corner, you see another wounded man, lying in a litter in the same apartment, shrink convulsively and groan as he gazes at the operation upon his comrade, not so much from physical pain as from the moral torture of anticipation.—You behold the frightful, soul-stirring scenes; you behold war, not from its conventional, beautiful, and brilliant side, with music and drum-beat, with fluttering flags and galloping generals, but you behold war in its real phase—in blood, in suffering, in death.

On emerging from this house of pain, you will infallibly experience a sensation of pleasure, you will inhale the fresh air more fully, you will feel satisfaction in the consciousness of your health, but, at the same time, you will draw from the sight of these sufferings a consciousness of your nothingness, and you will go calmly and without any indecision to the bastion.

"What do the death and sufferings of such an insignificant worm as I signify in comparison with so many deaths and such great sufferings?" But the sight of the clear sky, the brilliant sun, the fine city, the open church, and the soldiers moving about in various directions soon restores your mind to its normal condition of frivolity, petty cares, and absorption in the present alone.

Perhaps you meet the funeral procession of some officer coming from the church, with rose-colored coffin, and music and fluttering banners; perhaps the sounds of firing reach your ear from the bastion, but this does not lead you back to your former thoughts; the funeral seems to you a very fine military spectacle, and you do not connect with this spectacle, or with the sounds, any clear idea of suffering and death, as you did at the point where the bandaging was going on.

Passing the barricade and the church, you come to the most lively part of the city. On both sides hang the signs of shops and inns. Merchants, women in bonnets and kerchiefs, dandified officers,—everything speaks to you of the firmness of spirit, of the independence and the security of the inhabitants.

Enter the inn on the right if you wish to hear the conversations of sailors and officers; stories of the preceding night are sure to be in progress there, and of Fenka, and the affair of the 24th, and of the dearness and badness of cutlets, and of such and such a comrade who has been killed.

"Devil take it, how bad things are with us to-day!" ejaculates the bass voice of a beardless naval officer, with white brows and lashes, in a green knitted sash.

"Where?" asks another.

"In the fourth bastion," replies the young officer, and you are certain to look at the white-lashed officer with great attention, and even with some respect, at the words, "in the fourth bastion." His excessive ease of manner, the way he flourishes his hands, his loud laugh, and his voice, which seems to you insolent, reveal to you that peculiar boastful frame of mind which some very young men acquire after danger; nevertheless, you think he is about to tell you how bad the condition of things on the fourth bastion is because of the bombs and balls. Nothing of the sort! things are bad because it is muddy. "It's impossible to pass through the battery," says he, pointing at his boots, which are covered with mud above the calf. "And my best gun-captain was killed to-day; he was struck plump in the forehead," says another. "Who's that? Mitiukhin?" "No! . . . What now, are they going to give me any veal? the villains!" he adds to the servant of the inn. "Not Mitiukhin, but Abrosimoff. Such a fine young fellow!—he was in the sixth sally."

At another corner of the table, over a dish of cutlets with peas, and a bottle of sour Crimean wine called "Bordeaux," sit two infantry officers; one with a red collar, who is young and has two stars on his coat, is telling the other, with a black collar and no stars, about the affair at Alma. The former has already drunk a good deal, and it is evident, from the breaks in his narrative, from his undecided glance expressive of doubt as to whether he is

believed, and chiefly from the altogether too prominent part which he has played in it all, and from the excessive horror of it all, that he is strongly disinclined to bear strict witness to the truth. But these tales, which you will hear for a long time to come in every corner of Russia, are nothing to you; you prefer to go to the bastions, especially to the fourth, of which you have heard so many and such diverse things. When any one says that he has been in the fourth bastion, he says it with a peculiar air of pride and satisfaction; when any one says, "I am going to the fourth bastion," either a little agitation or a very great indifference is infallibly perceptible in him; when any one wants to jest about another, he says, "You must be stationed in the fourth bastion;" when you meet litters and inquire whence they come, the answer is generally, "From the fourth bastion." On the whole, two totally different opinions exist with regard to this terrible bastion; one is held by those who have never been in it, and who are convinced that the fourth bastion is a regular grave for every one who enters it, and the other by those who live in it, like the white-lashed midshipman, and who, when they mention the fourth bastion, will tell you whether it is dry or muddy there, whether it is warm or cold in the mud hut, and so forth.

During the half-hour which you have passed in the inn, the weather has changed; a fog which before spread over the sea has collected into damp, heavy, gray clouds, and has veiled the sun; a kind of melancholy, frozen mist sprinkles from above, and wets the roofs, the sidewalks, and the soldiers' overcoats.

Passing by yet another barricade, you emerge from the door at the right and ascend the principal street. Behind this barricade, the houses are unoccupied on both sides of the street, there are no signs, the doors are covered with boards, the windows are broken in; here the corners are broken away, there the roofs are pierced. The buildings seem to be old, to have undergone every sort of vicissitude and deprivation characteristic of veterans, and appear to gaze proudly and somewhat scornfully upon you. You stumble over the cannon-balls which strew the way, and into holes filled with water, which have been excavated in the stony ground by the bombs. In the street you meet and overtake bodies of soldiers, sharp-shooters, officers; now and then you encounter a woman or a child, but it is no longer a woman in a bonnet, but a sailor's daughter in an old fur cloak and soldier's boots. As you proceed along the street, and descend a small declivity, you observe that there are no longer any houses about you, but only some strange heaps of ruined stones, boards, clay, and beams; ahead of you, upon a steep hill, you perceive a black, muddy expanse, intersected by canals, and this that is in front is the fourth bastion. Here you meet still fewer people, no women are visible, the soldiers walk briskly, you come across drops of blood on the road, and you will certainly encounter there four soldiers with a stretcher and upon the stretcher a pale yellowish face and a blood-stained overcoat. If you inquire, "Where is he wounded?" the bearers will say angrily, without turning towards you, "In

the leg or the arm," if he is slightly wounded, or they will preserve a gloomy silence if no head is visible on the stretcher and he is already dead or badly hurt.

The shriek of a cannon-ball or a bomb close by surprises you unpleasantly, as you ascend the hill. You understand all at once, and quite differently from what you have before, the significance of those sounds of shots which you heard in the city. A quietly cheerful memory flashes suddenly before your fancy; your own personality begins to occupy you more than your observations; your attention to all that surrounds you diminishes, and a certain disagreeable feeling of uncertainty suddenly overmasters you. In spite of this decidedly base voice, which suddenly speaks within you, at the sight of danger, you force it to be silent, especially when you glance at a soldier who runs laughing past you at a trot, waving his hands, and slipping down the hill in the mud, and you involuntarily expand your chest, throw up your head a little higher, and climb the slippery, clayey hill. As soon as you have reached the top, rifle-balls begin to whiz to the right and left of you, and, possibly, you begin to reflect whether you will not go into the trench which runs parallel with the road; but this trench is full of such yellow, liquid, foul-smelling mud, more than knee-deep, that you will infallibly choose the path on the hill, the more so as you see that *every one uses the path.* After traversing a couple of hundred paces, you emerge upon a muddy expanse, all ploughed up, and surrounded on all sides by gabions, earthworks, platforms, earth huts, upon which great cast-iron guns stand, and cannon-balls lie in symmetrical heaps. All these seem to be heaped up without any aim, connection, or order. Here in the battery sit a knot of sailors; there in the middle of the square, half buried in mud, lies a broken cannon; further on, a foot-soldier, with his gun, is marching through the battery, and dragging his feet with difficulty through the sticky soil. But everywhere, on all sides, in every spot, you see broken dishes, unexploded bombs, cannon-balls, signs of encampment, all sunk in the liquid, viscous mud. You seem to hear not far from you the thud of a cannon-ball; on all sides, you seem to hear the varied sounds of balls,—humming like bees, whistling sharply, or in a whine like a cord—you hear the frightful roar of the fusillade, which seems to shake you all through with some horrible fright.

"So this is it, the fourth bastion, this is it—that terrible, really frightful place!" you think to yourself, and you experience a little sensation of pride, and a very large sensation of suppressed terror. But you are mistaken, this is not the fourth bastion. It is the Yazonovsky redoubt—a place which is comparatively safe, and not at all dreadful.

In order to reach the fourth bastion, you turn to the right, through this narrow trench, through which the foot-soldier has gone. In this trench you will perhaps meet stretchers again, sailors and soldiers with shovels; you will see the superintendent of the mines, mud huts, into which only two men can crawl by bending down, and there you will see sharpshooters of the Black Sea battalions, who are changing their shoes, eating, smoking their

pipes, and living; and you will still see everywhere that same stinking mud, traces of a camp, and cast-off iron débris in every possible form. Proceeding yet three hundred paces, you will emerge again upon a battery,—on an open space, all cut up into holes and surrounded by gabions, covered with earth, cannon, and earthworks. Here you will perhaps see five sailors playing cards under the shelter of the breastworks, and a naval officer who, perceiving that you are a new-comer, and curious, will with pleasure show his household arrangements, and everything which may be of interest to you.

This officer rolls himself a cigarette of yellow paper, with so much composure as he sits on a gun, walks so calmly from one embrasure to another, converses with you so quietly, without the slightest affectation, that, in spite of the bullets which hum above you even more thickly than before, you become cool yourself, question attentively, and listen to the officer's replies.

This officer will tell you, but only if you ask him, about the bombardment on the 5th, he will tell you how only one gun in his battery could be used, and out of all the gunners who served it only eight remained, and how, nevertheless, on the next morning, the 6th, he fired all the guns; he will tell you how a bomb fell upon a sailor's earth hut on the 5th, and laid low eleven men; he will point out to you, from the embrasures, the enemy's batteries and entrenchments, which are not more than thirty or forty fathoms distant from this point. I fear, however, that, under the influence of the whizzing bullets, you may thrust yourself out of the embrasure in order to view the enemy; you will see nothing, and, if you do see anything, you will be very much surprised that that white stone wall, which is so near you and from which white smoke rises in puffs,—that that white wall is the enemy—*he,* as the soldiers and sailors say.

It is even quite possible that the naval officer will want to discharge a shot or two in your presence, out of vanity or simply for his own pleasure. "Send the captain and his crew to the cannon;" and fourteen sailors step up briskly and merrily to the gun and load it—one thrusting his pipe into his pocket, another one chewing a biscuit, still another clattering his heels on the platform.

Observe the faces, the bearing, the movements of these men. In every wrinkle of that sunburned face, with its high cheek-bones, in every muscle, in the breadth of those shoulders, in the stoutness of those legs shod in huge boots, in every calm, firm, deliberate gesture, these chief traits which constitute the power of Russia—simplicity and straightforwardness—are visible; but here, on every face, it seems to you that the danger, misery, and the sufferings of war have, in addition to these principal characteristics, left traces of consciousness of personal worth, emotion, and exalted thought.

All at once a frightful roar, which shakes not your organs of hearing alone but your whole being, startles you so that you tremble all over. Then you hear the distant shriek of the shot as it pursues its course, and the dense smoke of the powder conceals from you the platform and the black figures of the sailors who are moving about upon it. You hear various remarks of the sailors

in reference to this shot, and you see their animation, and an exhibition of a feeling which you had not expected to behold perhaps—a feeling of malice, of revenge against the enemy, which lies hidden in the soul of each man. "It struck the embrasure itself; it seems to nave killed two men—see, they've carried them off!" you hear in joyful exclamation. "And now they are angry; they'll fire at us directly," says some one; and, in fact, shortly after you see a flash in front and smoke; the sentry, who is standing on the breastwork, shouts "Can-non!" And then the ball shrieks past you, strikes the earth, and scatters a shower of dirt and stones about it.

This ball enrages the commander of the battery; he orders a second and a third gun to be loaded, the enemy also begins to reply to us, and you experience a sensation of interest, you hear and see interesting things. Again the sentry shouts, "Can-non!" and you hear the same report and blow, the same shower, or he shouts "Mortar!" and you hear the monotonous, even rather pleasant whistle of the bomb, with which it is difficult to connect the thought of horror; you hear this whistle approaching you, and increasing in swiftness, then you see the black sphere, the impact on the ground, the resounding explosion of the bomb which can be felt. With the whistle and shriek, splinters fly again, stones whiz through the air, and mud showers over you. At these sounds you experience a strange feeling of enjoyment, and, at the same time, of terror. At the moment when you know that the projectile is flying towards you, it will infallibly occur to you that this shot will kill you; but the feeling of self-love upholds you, and no one perceives the knife which is cutting your heart. But when the shot has flown past without touching you, you grow animated, and a certain cheerful, inexpressibly pleasant feeling overpowers you, but only for a moment, so that you discover a peculiar sort of charm in danger, in this game of life and death, you want cannon-balls or bombs to strike nearer to you.

But again the sentry has shouted in his loud, thick voice, "Mortar!" again there is a shriek, and a bomb bursts, but with this noise comes the groan of a man. You approach the wounded man, at the same moment with the bearers; he has a strange, inhuman aspect, covered as he is with blood and mud. A part of the sailor's breast has been torn away. During the first moments, there is visible on his mud-stained face only fear and a certain simulated, premature expression of suffering, peculiar to men in that condition; but, at the same time, as the stretcher is brought to him and he is laid upon it on his sound side, you observe that this expression is replaced by an expression of a sort of exaltation and lofty, inexpressible thought. His eyes shine more brilliantly, his teeth are clenched, his head is held higher with difficulty, and, as they lift him up, he stops the bearers and says to his comrades, with difficulty and in a trembling voice: "Farewell, brothers!" He tries to say something more, and it is plain that he wants to say something touching, but he repeats once more: "Farewell, brothers!"

At that moment, one of his fellow-sailors steps up to him, puts the cap

on the head which the wounded man holds towards him, and, waving his hand indifferently, returns calmly to his gun. "That's the way with seven or eight men every day," says the naval officer to you, in reply to the expression of horror which has appeared upon your countenance, as he yawns and rolls a cigarette of yellow paper.

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Thus you have seen the defenders ot Sevastopol, on the very scene of the defence, and you go back paying no attention, for some reason or other, to the cannon-balls and bullets, which continue to shriek the whole way until you reach the ruined theatre,—you proceed with composure, and with your soul in a state of exaltation.

The principal and cheering conviction which you have brought away is the conviction of the impossibility of the Russian people wavering anywhere whatever—and this impossibility you have discerned not in the multitude of traverses, breastworks, artfully interlaced trenches, mines, and ordnance, piled one upon the other, of which you have comprehended nothing; but you have discerned it in the eyes, the speech, the manners, in what is called the spirit of the defenders of Sevastopol. What they are doing they do so simply, with so little effort and exertion, that you are convinced that they can do a hundred times more—that they can do anything. You understand that the feeling which makes them work is not a feeling of pettiness, ambition, forgetfulness, which you have yourself experienced, but a different sentiment, one more powerful, and one which has made of them men who live with their ordinary composure under the fire of cannon, amid hundreds of chances of death, instead of the one to which all men are subject who live under these conditions amid incessant labor, poverty, and dirt. Men will not accept these frightful conditions for the sake of a cross or a title, nor because of threats; there must be another lofty incentive as a cause, and this cause is the feeling which rarely appears, of which a Russian is ashamed, that which lies at the bottom of each man's soul —love for his country.

Only now have the tales of the early days of the siege of Sevastopol, when there were no fortifications there, no army, no physical possibility of holding it, and when at the same time there was not the slightest doubt that it would not surrender to the enemy,— of the days when that hero worthy of ancient Greece, Korniloff, said, as he reviewed the army: "We will die, children, but we will not surrender Sevastopol;" and our Russians, who are not fitted to be phrase-makers, replied: "We will die! hurrah!"—only now have tales of that time ceased to be for you the most beautiful historical legends, and have become real facts and worthy of belief. You comprehend clearly, you figure to yourself, those men whom you have just seen, as the very heroes of those grievous times, who have not fallen, but have been raised by the spirit, and have joyfully prepared for death, not for the sake of the city, but of the country. This epos of Sevastopol, whose hero was the Russian people, will leave mighty traces in Russia for a long time to come.

Night is already falling. The sun has emerged from the gray clouds, which cover the sky just before its setting, and has suddenly illuminated with a crimson glow the purple vapors, the greenish sea covered with ships and boats rocking on the regular swell, and the white buildings of the city, and the people who are moving through its streets. Sounds of some old waltz played by the regimental band on the boulevard, and the sounds of firing from the bastions, which echo them strangely, are borne across the water.

Moon-Slave

THE Princess Viola had, even in her childhood, an inevitable submission to the dance; a rhythmical madness in her blood answered hotly to the dance music, swaying her, as the wind sways trees, to movements of perfect sympathy and grace.

For the rest, she had her beauty and her long hair, that reached to her knees, and was thought lovable; but she was never very fervent and vivid unless she was dancing; at other times there almost seemed to be a touch of lethargy upon her. Now, when she was sixteen years old, she was betrothed to the Prince Hugo. With others the betrothal was merely a question of state. With her it was merely a question of obedience to the wishes of authority; it had been arranged; Hugo was *comme ci, comme ca*—no god in her eyes; it did not matter. But with Hugo it was quite different—he loved her.

The betrothal was celebrated by a banquet, and afterwards by a dance in the great hall of the palace. From this dance the Princess soon made her escape, quite discontented, and went to the furthest part of the palace gardens, where she could no longer hear the music calling her.

"They are all right," she said to herself as she thought of the men she had left, "but they cannot dance. Mechanically they are all right; they have learned it and don't make childish mistakes, but they are only one-two-three machines. They haven't the inspiration of dancing. It is so different when I dance alone."

She wandered on until she reached an old forsaken maze. It had been planned by a former king. All round it was a high crumbling wall with foxgloves growing on it. The maze itself had all its paths bordered with high opaque hedges; in the very center was a circular open space with tall pine-trees growing round it. Many years ago the clue to the maze had been lost; it was but rarely now that anyone entered it. Its gravel paths were green with weeds, and in some places the hedges, spreading beyond their borders, had made the way almost impassable.

For a moment or two Viola stood peering in at the gate—a narrow gate with curiously twisted bars of wrought iron surmounted by a heraldic device. Then the whim seized her to enter the maze and try to find the space in the center. She opened the gate and went in.

Outside everything was uncannily

visible in the light of the full moon, but here in the dark shaded alleys the night was conscious of itself. She soon forgot her purpose, and wandered about quite aimlessly, sometimes forcing her way where the brambles had flung a laced barrier across her path, and a dragging mass of convolvulus struck wet and cool upon her cheek. As chance would have it she suddenly found herself standing under the tall pines, and looking at the open space that formed the goal of the maze. She was pleased that she had got there. Here the ground was carpeted with sand, fine and, as it seemed, beaten hard. From the summer night sky immediately above, the moonlight, unobstructed here, streamed straight down upon the scene.

Viola began to think about dancing. Over the dry, smooth sand her little satin shoes moved easily, stepping and gliding, circling and stepping, as she hummed the tune to which they moved. In the center of the space she paused, looked at the wall of dark trees all round, at the shining stretches of silvery sand and at the moon above.

"My beautiful, moonlit, lonely, old dancing-room, why did I never find you before?" she cried; "but," she added, "you need music—there must be music here."

In her fantastic mood she stretched her soft, clasped hands upwards towards the moon.

"Sweet moon," she said in a kind of mock prayer, "make your white light come down in music into my dancing-room here, and I will dance most deliciously for you to see." She flung her head backward and let her hands fall; her eyes were half closed, and her mouth was a kissing mouth. "Ah! sweet moon," she whispered, "do this for me, and I will be your slave; I will be what you will."

Quite suddenly the air was filled with the sound of a grand invisible orchestra. Viola did not stop to wonder. To the music of a slow saraband she swayed and postured. In the music there was the regular beat of small drums and a perpetual drone. The air seemed to be filled with the perfume of some bitter spice. Viola could fancy almost that she saw a smouldering camp-fire and heard far off the roar of some desolate wild beast. She let her long hair fall, raising the heavy strands of it in either hand as she moved slowly to the laden music. Slowly her body swayed with drowsy grace, slowly her satin shoes slid over the silver sand.

The music ceased with a clash of cymbals. Viola rubbed her eyes. She fastened her hair up carefully again. Suddenly she looked up, almost imperiously.

"Music! more music!" she cried.

Once more the music came. This time it was a dance of caprice, pelting along over the violin strings, leaping, laughing, wanton. Again an illusion seemed to cross her eyes. An old king was watching her, a king with the sordid history of the exhaustion of pleasure written on his flaccid face. A hook-nosed courtier by his side settled the ruffles at his wrists and mumbled, "Ravissant! Quel malheur que la vieillesse!" It was a strange illusion. Faster and faster she sped to the music, stepping, spinning, pirouetting; the dance was light as thistle-down, fierce as fire, smooth as a rapid stream.

The moment that the music ceased Viola became horribly afraid. She

turned and fled away from the moonlit space, through the trees, down the dark alleys of the maze, not heeding in the least which turn she took, and yet she found herself soon at the outside iron gate. From thence she ran through the palace garden, hardly ever pausing to take breath, until she reached the palace itself. In the eastern sky the first signs of dawn were showing; in the palace the festivities were drawing to an end. As she stood alone in the outer hall Prince Hugo came towards her.

"Where have you seen, Viola?" he said sternly. "What have you been doing?"

She stamped her little foot.

"I will not be questioned," she replied angrily.

"I have some right to question," he said.

She laughed a little.

"For the first time in my life," she said, "I have been dancing."

He turned away in hopeless silence.

* * * * * * *

The months passed away. Slowly a great fear came over Viola, a fear that would hardly ever leave her. For every month at the full moon, whether she would or no, she found herself driven to the maze, through its mysterious walks into that strange dancing-room. And when she was there the music began once more, and once more she danced most deliciously for the moon to see. The second time that this happened she had merely thought that it was a recurrence of her own whim, and that the music was but a trick that the imagination had chosen to repeat. The third time frightened her, and she knew that the force that sways the tides had strange power over her. The fear grew as the year fell, for each month the music went on for a longer time—each month some of the pleasure had gone from the dance. On bitter nights in winter the moon called her and she came, when the breath was vapor, and the trees that circled her dancing-room were black bare skeletons, and the frost was cruel. She dared not tell anyone, and yet it was with difficulty that she kept her secret. Somehow chance seemed to favor her, and she always found a way to return from her midnight dance to her own room without being observed. Each month the summons seemed to be more imperious and urgent. Once when she was alone on her knees before the lighted altar in the private chapel of the palace she suddenly felt that the words of the familiar Latin prayer had gone from her memory. She rose to her feet, she sobbed bitterly, but the call had come and she could not resist it. She passed out of the chapel and down the palace-gardens. How madly she danced that night!

She was to be married in the spring. She began to be more gentle with Hugo now. She had a blind hope that when they were married she might be able to tell him about it, and he might be able to protect her, for she had always known him to be fearless. She could not love him, but she tried to be good to him. One day he mentioned to her that he had tried to find his way to the center of the maze, and had failed. She smiled faintly. If only she could fail! But she never did.

On the night before the wedding-day she had gone to bed and slept peacefully, thinking with her last waking mo-

ments of Hugo. Overhead the full moon came up the sky. Quite suddenly Viola was wakened with the impulse to fly to the dancing-room. It seemed to bid her hasten with breathless speed. She flung a cloak around her, slipped her naked feet into her dancing shoes, and hurried forth. No one saw her or heard her—on the marble staircase of the palace, on down the terraces of the garden, she ran as fast as she could. A thorn-plant caught in her cloak, but she sped on, tearing it free; a sharp stone cut through the satin of one shoe, and her foot was wounded and bleeding, but she sped on. As the pebble that is flung from the cliff must fall until it reaches the sea, as the white ghost-moth must come in from cool hedges and scented darkness to a burning death in the lamp by which you sit so late—so Viola had no choice. The moon called her. The moon drew her to that circle of hard, bright sand and the pitiless music.

It was brilliant, rapid music tonight. Viola threw off her cloak and danced. As she did so, she saw that a shadow lay over a fragment of the moon's edge. It was the night of a total eclipse. She heeded it not. The intoxication of the dance was on her. She was all in white; even her face was pale in the moonlight. Every movement was full of poetry and grace.

The music would not stop. She had grown deathly weary. It seemed to her that she had been dancing for hours, and the shadow had nearly covered the moon's face, so that it was almost dark. She could hardly see the trees around her. She went on dancing, stepping, spinning, pirouetting, held by the merciless music.

It stopped at last, just when the shadow had quite covered the moon's face, and all was dark. But it stopped only for a moment, and then began again. This time it was a slow, passionate waltz. It was useless to resist; she began to dance once more. As she did so she uttered a sudden shrill scream of horror, for in the dead darkness a hot hand had caught her own and whirled her round, *and she was no longer dancing alone.*

* * * * * * *

The search for the missing Princess lasted during the whole of the following day. In the evening Prince Hugo, his face anxious and firmly set, passed in his search the iron gate of the maze, and noted on the stones beside it the stain of a drop of blood. Within the gate was another stain. He followed this clue, which had been left by Viola's wounded foot, until he reached that open space in the center that had served Viola for her dancing-room. It was quite empty. He noticed that the sand round the hedges was all worn down, as though someone had danced there, round and round, for a long time. But no separate footprint was distinguishable there. Just outside this track, however, he saw two footprints clearly defined close together: one was the print of a tiny satin shoe; the other was the print of a large naked foot—a cloven foot.

The Triple Duel

Jack Easy walked up to the boatswain on the quarter deck, and, taking off his hat, with the utmost politeness, said to him:

"If I mistake not, Mr. Biggs, your conversation refers to me."

"Very likely it does," replied the boatswain. "Listeners hear no good of themselves."

"It happears that gentlemen can't converse without being vatched," continued Mr. Easthupp, the purser's steward, pulling up his shirt-collar.

"It is not the first time you have thought proper to make very offensive remarks, Mr. Biggs; and as you appear to consider yourself ill-treated I can only say," continued our hero, with a very polite bow, "that I shall be most happy to give you satisfaction."

"I am your superior officer, Mr. Easy," replied the boatswain.

"Yes, by the rules of the service; but you just now asserted that you would waive your rank: indeed, I dispute it on this occasion; I am on the quarter-deck, and you are not."

"This is a gentleman whom you have insulted, Mr. Easy," replied the boatswain, pointing to the purser's steward.

"Yes, Mr. Heasy, quite as good a gentleman as yourself, although I 'ave 'ad misfortunes. I ham of as hold a family as hany in the country," replied Mr. Easthupp, now backed by the boatswain. "Many the year did I valk Bond Street, and I 'ave as good blood in my weins as you, Mr. Heasy, although I 'ave been misfortunate. I've had hadmirals in my family."

"You have insulted this gentleman," said Mr. Biggs, in continuation; "and, notwithstanding all your talk of equality, you are afraid to give him satisfaction; you shelter yourself under your quarter-deck."

"Mr. Biggs," replied our hero, who was now very wroth, "I shall go on shore directly we arrive at Malta. Let you, and this fellow, put on plain clothes, and I will meet you both; and then I will show you whether I am afraid to give satisfaction."

"One at a time," said the boatswain.

"No, sir, not one at a time, but both at the same time, I will fight both or none. If you are my superior officer, you must descend," replied Jack, with an ironical sneer, "to meet me, or I will not descend to meet that fellow, whom I believe to have been little better than a pickpocket." . . .

Mr. Biggs, having declared he would fight, of course had to look out for a second, and he fixed upon Mr. Tallboys, the gunner, and requested him to be his friend. Mr. Tallboys, who had been latterly very much annoyed by Jack's victories over him in the science of navigation, and therefore felt ill-will toward him, consented; but he was very much puzzled how to arrange that three were to fight at the same time, for he had no idea of there being two duels; so he went to his cabin and commenced reading. There was no one in the ship to whom Jack could confide but Gascoigne; he therefore went to him, and, although Gascoigne thought it was excessively infra dig. of Jack to meet even the

boatswain; as the challenge had been given, there was no retracting, and he therefore consented, like all midshipmen, anticipating fun, and quite thoughtless of the consequences. . . .

Mr. Tallboys addressed Mr. Gascoigne, taking him apart while the boatswain amused himself with a glass of grog, and our hero sat outside, teasing a monkey.

"Mr. Gascoigne," said the gunner, "I have been very much puzzled how this duel should be fought, but I have at last found out. You see there are three parties to fight; had there been two or four there would have been no difficulty, as the right line or square might guide us in that instance; but we must arrange it upon the triangle in this."

Gascoigne stared: he could not imagine what was coming.

"Are you aware, Mr. Gascoigne, of the properties of an equilateral triangle?"

"Yes," replied the midshipman; "it has three equal sides. But what the devil has that to do with the duel?"

"Everything, Mr. Gascoigne," replied the gunner; "it has resolved the great difficulty; indeed, the duel between three can only be fought upon that principle. You observe," said the gunner, taking a piece of chalk out of his pocket and making a triangle on the table, "in this figure we have three points, each equidistant from each other; and we have three combatants; so that placing one at each point, it is all fair play for the three: Mr. Easy, for instance, stands here, the boatswain here, and the purser's steward at the third corner. Now, if the distance is fairly measured, it will be all right."

"But then," replied Gascoigne, delighted at the idea, "how are they to fire?"

"It certainly is not of much consequence," replied the gunner; "but still, as sailors, it appears to me that they should fire with the sun; that is, Mr. Easy fires at Mr. Biggs, Mr. Biggs at Mr. Easthupp, and Mr. Easthupp fires at Mr. Easy, so that you perceive that each party has his shot at one, and at the same time receives the fire of another."

Gascoigne was in ecstasies at the novelty of the proceeding, the more so as he perceived that Easy obtained every advantage of the arrangement.

"Upon my word, Mr. Tallboys, I give you great credit; you have a profound mathematical head, and I am delighted with your arrangement. Of course in these affairs the principals are bound to comply with the arrangements of the seconds, and I shall insist upon Mr. Easy consenting to your excellent and scientific proposal."

Gascoigne went out, and, pulling Jack away from the monkey, told him what the gunner had proposed, at which Jack laughed heartily.

The gunner also explained it to the boatswain, who did not very well comprehend, but replied:

"I dare say it's all right, shot for shot, and damn all favours."

The parties then repaired to the spot with two pairs of ship's pistols, which Mr. Tallboys had smuggled on shore; and as soon as they were on the ground the gunner called Mr. Easthupp out of the cooperage. In the meantime Gascoigne had been measuring an equilateral triangle of twelve paces, and marked it out. Mr. Tallboys, on his

return with the purser's steward, went over the ground, and, finding that it was "equal angles subtended by equal sides," declared that all was right. Easy took his station, the boatswain was put into his, and Mr. Easthupp, who was quite in a mystery, was led by the gunner to the third position.

"But, Mr. Tallboys," said the purser's steward, "I don't understand this. Mr. Easy will first fight Mr. Biggs, will he not?"

"No," replied the gunner, "this is a duel of three. You will fire at Mr. Easy, Mr. Easy will fire at Mr. Biggs, and Mr. Biggs will fire at you. It is all arranged, Mr. Easthupp."

"But," said Mr. Easthupp, "I do not understand it. Why is Mr. Biggs to fire at me? I have no quarrel with Mr. Biggs."

"Because Mr. Easy fires at Mr. Biggs, and Mr. Biggs must have his shot as well."

"If you have ever been in the company of gentlemen, Mr. Easthupp," observed Gascoigne, "you must know something about duelling."

"Yes, yes, I've kept the best company, Mr. Gascoigne, and I can give a gentleman satisfaction; but——"

"Then sir, if that is the case, you must know that your honour is in the hands of your second, and that no gentleman appeals."

"Yes, yes, I know that, Mr. Gascoigne; but, still, I've no quarrel with Mr. Biggs, and therefore Mr. Biggs, of course, will not aim at me."

"Why, you don't think that I'm going to be fired at for nothing?" replied the boatswain. "No, no, I'll have my shot anyhow."

"But at your friend, Mr. Biggs?"

"All the same I shall fire at somebody; shot for shot, and hit the luckiest."

"Vel, gentlemen, I purtest against these proceedings," replied Mr. Easthupp. "I came here to have satisfaction from Mr. Easy, and not to be fired at by Mr. Biggs."

"Don't you have satisfaction when you fire at Mr. Easy?" replied the gunner. "What more would you have?"

"I purtest against Mr. Biggs firing at me."

"So you would have a shot without receiving one?" cried Gascoigne. "The fact is that this fellow's a confounded coward, and ought to be kicked into the cooperage again."

At this affront Mr. Easthupp rallied, and accepted the pistol offered by the gunner.

"You 'ear those words, Mr. Biggs? Pretty language to use to a gentleman! You shall 'ear from me, sir, as soon as the ship is paid off. I purtest no longer, Mr. Tallboys. Death before dishonour! I'm a gentleman, damme!"

At all events, the swell was not a very courageous gentleman, for he trembled most exceedingly as he pointed his pistol. The gunner gave the word as if he were exercising the great guns on board ship.

"Cock your locks! Take good aim at the object! Fire! Stop your vents!"

The only one of the combatants who appeared to comply with the latter supplementary order was Mr. Easthupp, who clapped his hand to his trousers behind, gave a loud yell, and then dropped down, the bullet having passed clean through his seat of

honour, from his having presented his broadside as a target to the boatswain as he faced toward our hero. Jack's shot had also taken effect, having passed through both the boatswain's cheeks, without further mischief than extracting two of his best upper double teeth and forcing through the hole of the further cheek the boatswain's own quid of tobacco. As for Mr. Easthupp's ball, as he was very unsettled, and shut his eyes before he fired, it had gone the Lord knows where.

The purser's steward lay on the ground and screamed; the boatswain spit out his double teeth and two or three mouthfuls of blood, and then threw down his pistol in a rage.

"A pretty business, by God!" sputtered he. "He's put my pipe out. How the devil am I to pipe to dinner when I'm ordered, all my wind 'scaping through the cheeks?"

In the meantime, the others had gone to the assistance of the purser's steward, who continued his vociferations. They examined him, and considered a wound in that part not to be dangerous.

"Hold your confounded bawling," cried the gunner, "or you'll have the guard down here. You're not hurt."

"Hain't hi!" roared the steward. "Oh, let me die! Let me die! Don't move me!"

"Nonsense!" cried the gunner, "you must get up and walk down to the boat; if you don't, we'll leave you. Hold your tongue, confound you! You won't? Then I'll give you something to halloo for."

Whereupon Mr. Tallboys commenced cuffing the poor wretch right and left, who received so many swingeing boxes of the ear that he was soon reduced to merely pitiful plaints of "Oh, dear! such inhumanity! I purtest! Oh, dear! must I get up? I can't, indeed."

"I do not think he can move, Mr. Tallboys," said Gascoigne. "I should think the best plan would be to call up two of the men from the cooperage and let them take him at once to the hospital."

The gunner went down to the cooperage to call the men. Mr. Biggs, who had bound up his face as if he had a toothache, for the bleeding had been very slight, came up to the purser's steward, exclaiming:

"What the hell are you making such a howling about? Look at me, with two shot-holes through my figurehead, while you have only got one in your stern. I wish I could change with you, by heavens! for I could use my whistle then. Now, if I attempt to pipe, there will be such a wasteful expenditure of his Majesty's store of wind that I never shall get out a note. A wicked shot of yours, Mr. Easy."

"I really am very sorry," replied Jack, with a polite bow, "and I beg to offer my best apology."

The Pit and the Pendulum

(First published in *The Gift*, 1843)

Impia tortorum longas hic turba furores
Sanguinis innocui, non satiata, aluit.
Sospite nunc patria, fracto nunc funeris antro,
Mors ubi dira fuit vita salusque patent.

(*Quatrain composed for the gates of a market to be erected upon the site of the Jacobin Club House at Paris.*)

I WAS sick—sick unto death with that long agony; and when they at length unbound me, and I was permitted to sit, I felt that my senses were leaving me. The sentence—the dread sentence of death—was the last of distinct accentuation which reached my ears. After that, the sound of the inquisitorial voices seemed merged in one dreamy indeterminate hum. It conveyed to my soul the idea of *revolution*—perhaps from its association in fancy with the burr of a mill-wheel. This only for a brief period, for presently I heard no more. Yet, for a while, I saw—but with how terrible an exaggeration! I saw the lips of the black-robed judges. They appeared to me white—whiter than the sheet upon which I trace these words—and thin even to grotesqueness; thin with the intensity of their expression of firmness—of immovable resolution—of stern contempt of human torture. I saw that the decrees of what to me was Fate were still issuing from those lips. I saw them writhe with a deadly locution. I saw them fashion the syllables of my name; and I shuddered because no sound succeeded. I saw, too, for a few moments of delirious horror, the soft and nearly imperceptible waving of the sable draperies which enwrapped the walls of the apartment. And then my vision fell upon the seven tall candles upon the table. At first they wore the aspect of charity, and seemed white slender angels who would save me; but then, all at once, there came a most deadly nausea over my spirit, and I felt every fibre in my frame thrill as if I had touched the wire of a galvanic battery, while the angel forms became meaningless spectres, with heads of flame, and I saw that from them there would be no help. And then there stole into my fancy, like a rich musical note, the thought of what sweet rest there must be in the grave. The thought came gently and stealthily, and it seemed long before it attained full appreciation; but just as my spirit came at length properly to feel and entertain it, the figures of the judges vanished, as if magically, from before me; the tall candles sank into nothingness; their flames went out utterly; the blackness of darkness supervened; all sensations appeared swallowed up in a mad rushing descent as of the soul into Hades. Then silence, and stillness, and night were the universe.

I had swooned; but still will not say that all of consciousness was lost. What of it there remained I will not attempt to define, or even to describe; yet all

was not lost. In the deepest slumber —no! In delirium—no! In a swoon —no! In death—no! even in the grave all *is not* lost. Else there is no immortality for man. Arousing from the most profound of slumbers, we break the gossamer web of *some* dream. Yet in a second afterward, (so frail may that web have been) we remember not that we have dreamed. In the return to life from the swoon there are two stages: first, that of the sense of mental or spiritual; secondly, that of the sense of physical existence. It seems probable that if, upon reaching the second stage, we could recall the impressions of the first, we should find these impressions eloquent in memories of the gulf beyond. And that gulf is—what? How at least shall we distinguish its shadows from those of the tomb? But if the impressions of what I have termed the first stage are not, at will, recalled, yet, after long interval, do they not come unbidden, while we marvel whence they come? He who has never swooned, is not he who finds strange palaces and wildly familiar faces in coals that glow; is not he who beholds floating in mid-air the sad visions that the many may not view; is not he who ponders over the perfume of some novel flower; is not he whose brain grows bewildered with the meaning of some musical cadence which has never before arrested his attention.

Amid frequent and thoughtful endeavors to remember, amid earnest struggles to regather some token of the state of seeming nothingness into which my soul had lapsed, there have been moments when I have dreamed of success; there have been brief, very brief periods when I have conjured up remembrances which the lucid reason of a later epoch assures me could have had reference only to that condition of seeming unconsciousness. These shadows of memory tell, indistinctly, of tall figures that lifted and bore me in silence down—down—still down—till a hideous dizziness oppressed me at the mere idea of the interminableness of the descent. They tell also of a vague horror at my heart, on account of that heart's unnatural stillness. Then comes a sense of sudden motionlessness throughout all things; as if those who bore me (a ghastly train!) had outrun, in their descent, the limits of the limitless, and paused from the wearisomeness of their toil. After this I call to mind flatness and dampness; and then all is *madness* —the madness of a memory which busies itself among forbidden things.

Very suddenly there came back to my soul motion and sound—the tumultuous motion of the heart, and, in my ears, the sound of its beating. Then a pause in which all is blank. Then again sound, and motion, and touch—a tingling sensation pervading my frame. Then the mere consciousness of existence, without thought—a condition which lasted long. Then, very suddenly, *thought,* and shuddering terror, and earnest endeavor to comprehend my true state. Then a strong desire to lapse into insensibility. Then a rushing revival of soul and a successful effort to move. And now a full memory of the trial, of the judges, of the sable draperies, of the sentence, of the sickness, of the swoon. Then entire forgetfulness of all that followed; of all that a later day and much earnestness of endeavor have enabled me vaguely to recall.

So far, I had not opened my eyes. I felt that I lay upon my back, unbound. I reached out my hand, and it fell heavily upon something damp and hard. There I suffered it to remain for many minutes, while I strove to imagine where and *what* I could be. I longed, dared not, to employ my vision. I dreaded the first glance at objects around me. It was not that I feared to look upon things horrible, but that I grew aghast lest there should be *nothing* to see. At length, with a wild desperation at heart, I quickly unclosed my eyes. My worst thoughts, then, were confirmed. The blackness of eternal night encompassed me. I struggled for breath. The intensity of the darkness seemed to oppress and stifle me. The atmosphere was intolerably close. I still lay quietly, and made effort to exercise my reason. I brought to mind the inquisitorial proceedings, and attempted from that point to deduce my real condition. The sentence had passed; and it appeared to me that a very long interval of time had since elapsed. Yet not for a moment did I suppose myself actually dead. Such a supposition, notwithstanding what we read in fiction, is altogether inconsistent with real existence;—but where and in what state was I? The condemned to death, I knew, perished usually at the *auto-dafes*, and one of these had been held on the very night of the day of my trial. Had I been remanded to my dungeon, to await the next sacrifice, which would not take place for many months? This I at once saw could not be. Victims had been in immediate demand. Moreover, my dungeon, as well as all the condemned cells at Toledo, had stone floors, and light was not altogether excluded.

A fearful idea now suddenly drove the blood in torrents upon my heart, and for a brief period I once more relapsed into insensibility. Upon recovering, I at once started to my feet, trembling convulsively in every fibre. I thrust my arms wildly above and around me in all directions. I felt nothing; yet dreaded to move a step, lest I should be impeded by the walls of a *tomb*. Perspiration burst from every pore, and stood in cold big beads upon my forehead. The agony of suspense grew at length intolerable, and I cautiously moved forward, with my arms extended, and my eyes straining from their sockets in the hope of catching some faint ray of light. I proceeded for many paces; but still all was blackness and vacancy. I breathed more freely. It seemed evident that mine was not, at least, the most hideous of fates.

And now, as I still continued to step cautiously onward, there came thronging upon my recollection a thousand vague rumors of the horrors of Toledo. Of the dungeons there had been strange things narrated—fables I had always deemed them,—but yet strange, and too ghastly to repeat, save in a whisper. Was I left to perish of starvation in the subterranean world of darkness; or what fate, perhaps even more fearful, awaited me? That the result would be death, and a death of more than customary bitterness, I knew too well the character of my judges to doubt. The mode and the hour were all that occupied or distracted me.

My outstretched hands at length encountered some solid obstruction. It

was a wall, seemingly of stone masonry —very smooth, slimy, and cold. I followed it up; stepping with all the careful distrust with which certain antique narratives had inspired me. This process, however, afforded me no means of ascertaining the dimensions of my dungeon, as I might make its circuit and return to the point whence I set out without being aware of the fact, so perfectly uniform seemed the wall. I therefore sought the knife which had been in my pocket when led into the inquisitorial chamber; but it was gone; my clothes had been exchanged for a wrapper of coarse serge. I had thought of forcing the blade in some minute crevice of the masonry, so as to identify my point of departure. The difficulty, nevertheless, was but trivial; although, in the disorder of my fancy, it seemed at first insuperable. I tore a part of the hem from the robe and placed the fragment at full length, and at right angles to the wall. In groping my way around the prison, I could not fail to encounter this rag upon completing the circuit. So, at least, I thought; but I had not counted upon the extent of the dungeon, or upon my own weakness. The ground was moist and slippery. I staggered onward for some time, when I stumbled and fell. My excessive fatigue induced me to remain prostrate; and sleep soon overtook me as I lay.

Upon awaking, and stretching forth an arm, I found beside me a loaf and a pitcher with water. I was too much exhausted to reflect upon this circumstance, but ate and drank with avidity. Shortly afterward, I resumed my tour around the prison, and with much toil, came at last upon the fragment of the serge. Up to the period when I fell, I had counted fifty-two paces, and upon resuming my walk, I had counted forty-eight more—when I arrived at the rag. There were in all, then, a hundred paces; and, admitting two paces to the yard, I presumed the dungeon to be fifty yards in circuit. I had met, however, with many angles in the wall, and thus I could form no guess at the shape of the vault, for vault I could not help supposing it to be.

I had little object—certainly no hope —in these researches; but a vague curiosity prompted me to continue them. Quitting the wall, I resolved to cross the area of the enclosure. At first, I proceeded with extreme caution, for the floor, although seemingly of solid material, was treacherous with slime. At length, however, I took courage, and did not hesitate to step firmly—endeavoring to cross in as direct a line as possible. I had advanced some ten or twelve paces in this manner, when the remnant of the torn hem of my robe became entangled between my legs. I stepped on it, and fell violently on my face.

In the confusion attending my fall, I did not immediately apprehend a somewhat startling circumstance, which yet, in a few seconds afterward, and while I still lay prostrate, arrested my attention. It was this: my chin rested upon the floor of the prison, but my lips, and the upper portion of my head, although seemingly at a less elevation than the chin, touched nothing. At the same time, my forehead seemed bathed in a clammy vapor, and the peculiar smell of decayed fungus arose to my nostrils. I put forward my arm, and shud-

dered to find that I had fallen at the very brink of a circular pit, whose extent, of course, I had no means of ascertaining at the moment. Groping about the masonry just below the margin, I succeeded in dislodging a small fragment, and let it fall into the abyss. For many seconds I hearkened to its reverberations as it dashed against the sides of the chasm in its descent; at length, there was a sullen plunge into water, succeeded by loud echoes. At the same moment, there came a sound resembling the quick opening and as rapid closing of a door overhead, while a faint gleam of light flashed suddenly through the gloom, and as suddenly faded away.

I saw clearly the doom which had been prepared for me, and congratulated myself upon the timely accident by which I had escaped. Another step before my fall, and the world had seen me no more. And the death just avoided was of that very character which I had regarded as fabulous and frivolous in the tales respecting the Inquisition. To the victims of its tyranny, there was the choice of death with its direst physical agonies, or death with its most hideous moral horrors. I had been reserved for the latter. By long suffering my nerves had been unstrung, until I trembled at the sound of my own voice, and had become in every respect a fitting subject for the species of torture which awaited me.

Shaking in every limb, I groped my way back to the wall—resolving there to perish rather than risk the terrors of the wells, of which my imagination now pictured many in various positions about the dungeon. In other conditions of mind, I might have had courage to end my misery at once, by a plunge into one of these abysses; but now I was the veriest of cowards. Neither could I forget what I had read of these pits—that the *sudden* extinction of life formed no part of their most horrible plan.

Agitation of spirit kept me awake for many long hours, but at length I again slumbered. Upon arousing, I found by my side, as before, a loaf and a pitcher of water. A burning thirst consumed me, and I emptied the vessel at a draught. It must have been drugged—for scarcely had I drunk, before I became irresistibly drowsy. A deep sleep fell upon me—a sleep like that of death. How long it lasted, of course, I know not; but when, once again, I unclosed my eyes, the objects around me were visible. By a wild, sulphurous lustre, the origin of which I could not at first determine, I was enabled to see the extent and aspect of the prison.

In its size I had been greatly mistaken. The whole circuit of its walls did not exceed twenty-five yards. For some minutes this fact occasioned me a world of vain trouble; vain indeed—for what could be of less importance, under the terrible circumstances which environed me, than the mere dimensions of my dungeon? But my soul took a wild interest in trifles, and I busied myself in endeavors to account for the error I had committed in my measurement. The truth at length flashed upon me. In my first attempt at exploration I had counted fifty-two paces, up to the period when I fell: I must then have been within a pace or two of the fragment of serge; in fact, I had nearly performed the circuit of

the vault. I then slept and, upon awaking, I must have returned upon my steps—thus supposing the circuit nearly double what it actually was. My confusion of mind prevented me from observing that I began my tour with the wall to the left, and ended it with the wall to the right.

I had been deceived, too, in respect to the shape of the enclosure. In feeling my way I had found many angles, and thus deduced an idea of great irregularity; so potent is the effect of total darkness upon one arousing from lethargy or sleep! The angles were simply those of a few slight depressions, or niches, at odd intervals. The general shape of the prison was square. What I had taken for masonry seemed now to be iron, or some other metal, in huge plates, whose sutures or joints occasioned the depression. The entire surface of this metallic enclosure was rudely daubed in all the hideous and repulsive devices to which the charnel superstition of the monks has given rise. The figures of fiends in aspects of menace, with skeleton forms, and other more really fearful images, overspread and disfigured the walls. I observed that the outlines of these monstrosities were sufficiently distinct, but that the colors seemed faded and blurred, as if from the effects of a damp atmosphere. I now noticed the floor, too, which was of stone. In the centre yawned the circular pit from whose jaws I had escaped; but it was the only one in the dungeon.

All this I saw indistinctly and by much effort—for my personal condition had been greatly changed during slumber. I now lay upon my back, and at full length, on a species of low framework of wood. To this I was securely bound by a long strap resembling a surcingle. It passed in many convolutions about my limbs and body, leaving at liberty only my head, and my left arm to such an extent, that I could, by dint of much exertion, supply myself with food from an earthen dish which lay by my side on the floor. I saw, to my horror, that the pitcher had been removed. I say to my horror—for I was consumed with intolerable thirst. This thirst it appeared to be the design of my persecutors to stimulate—for the food in the dish was meat pungently seasoned.

Looking upward, I surveyed the ceiling of my prison. It was some thirty or forty feet overhead, and constructed much as the side walls. In one of its panels a very singular figure riveted my whole attention. It was the painted figure of Time as he is commonly represented, save that, in lieu of a scythe, he held what, at a casual glance, I supposed to be the pictured image of a huge pendulum, such as we see on antique clocks. There was something, however, in the appearance of this machine which caused me to regard it more attentively. While I gazed directly upward at it (for its position was immediately over my own) I fancied that I saw it in motion. In an instant afterward the fancy was confirmed. Its sweep was brief, and of course slow. I watched it for some minutes somewhat in fear, more in wonder. Wearied at length with observing its dull movement, I turned my eyes upon the other objects in the cell.

A slight noise attracted my notice, and, looking to the floor, I saw several enormous rats traversing it. They had

issued from the well which lay just within view to my right. Even then, while I gazed, they came up in troops, hurriedly, with ravenous eyes, allured by the scent of the meat. From this it required much effort and attention to scare them away.

It might have been half an hour, perhaps, even an hour (for I could take but imperfect note of time), before I again cast my eyes upward. What I then saw confounded and amazed me. The sweep of the pendulum had increased in extent by nearly a yard. As a natural consequence its velocity was also much greater. But what mainly disturbed me was the idea that it had perceptibly *descended.* I now observed —with what horror it is needless to say —that its nether extremity was formed of a crescent of glittering steel, about a foot in length from horn to horn; the horns upward, and the under edge evidently as keen as that of a razor. Like a razor also, it seemed massy and heavy, tapering from the edge into a solid and broad structure above. It was appended to a weighty rod of brass, and the whole *hissed* as it swung through the air.

I could no longer doubt the doom prepared for me by monkish ingenuity in torture. My cognizance of the pit had become known to the inquisitorial agents—*the pit,* whose horrors had been destined for so bold a recusant as myself—*the pit,* typical of hell and regarded by rumor as the Ultima Thule of all their punishments. The plunge into this pit I had avoided by the merest of accidents, and I knew that surprise, or entrapment into torment, formed an important portion of all the grotesquerie of these dungeon deaths. Having failed to fall, it was no part of the demon plan to hurl me into the abyss, and thus (there being no alternative) a different and a milder destruction awaited me. Milder! I half smiled in my agony as I thought of such application of such a term.

What boots it to tell of the long, long hours of horror more than mortal, during which I counted the rushing oscillations of the steel! Inch by inch —line by line—with a descent only appreciable at intervals that seemed ages—down and still down it came! Days passed—it might have been that many days passed—ere it swept so closely over me as to fan me with its acrid breath. The odor of the sharp steel forced itself into my nostrils. I prayed—I wearied heaven with my prayer for its more speedy descent. I grew frantically mad, and struggled to force myself upward against the sweep of the fearful scimitar. And then I fell suddenly calm, and lay smiling at the glittering death, as a child at some rare bauble.

There was another interval of utter insensibility; it was brief; for, upon again lapsing into life, there had been no perceptible descent in the pendulum. But it might have been long—for I knew there were demons who took note of my swoon, and who could have arrested the vibration at pleasure. Upon my recovery, too, I felt very—oh! inexpressibly—sick and weak, as if through long inanition. Even amid the agonies of that period, the human nature craved food. With painful effort I outstretched my left arm as far as my bonds permitted, and took possession of the small remnant which had been spared me by the rats. As I put a

portion of it within my lips, there rushed to my mind a half-formed thought of joy—of hope. Yet what business had *I* with hope? It was, as I say, a half-formed thought—man has many such, which are never completed. I felt that it was of joy—of hope; but I felt also that it had perished in its formation. In vain I struggled to perfect—to regain it. Long suffering had nearly annihilated all my ordinary powers of mind. I was an imbecile—an idiot.

The vibration of the pendulum was at right angles to my length. I saw that the crescent was designed to cross the region of the heart. It would fray the serge of my robe—it would return and repeat its operations—again—and again. Notwithstanding its terrifically wide sweep (some thirty feet or more), and the hissing vigor of its descent, sufficient to sunder these very walls of iron, still the fraying of my robe would be all that, for several minutes, it would accomplish. And at this thought I paused. I dared not go further than this reflection. I dwelt upon it with a pertinacity of attention—as if, in so dwelling, I could arrest *here* the descent of the steel. I forced myself to ponder upon the sound of the crescent as it should pass across the garment—upon the peculiar thrilling sensation which the friction of cloth produces on the nerves. I pondered upon all this frivolity until my teeth were on edge.

Down—steadily down it crept. I took a frenzied pleasure in contrasting its downward with its lateral velocity. To the right—to the left—far and wide with the shriek of a damned spirit! to my heart, with the stealthy pace of the tiger! I alternately laughed and howled, as the one or the other idea grew predominant.

Down—certainly, relentlessly down! It vibrated within three inches of my bosom! I struggled violently—furiously—to free my left arm. This was free only from the elbow to the hand. I could reach the latter, from the platter beside me, to my mouth, with great effort, but no farther. Could I have broken the fastenings above the elbow, I would have seized and attempted to arrest the pendulum. I might as well have attempted to arrest an avalanche!

Down—still unceasingly—still inevitably down! I gasped and struggled at each vibration. I shrunk convulsively at its every sweep. My eyes followed its outward or upward whorls with the eagerness of the most unmeaning despair; they closed themselves spasmodically at the descent, although death would have been a relief, oh, how unspeakable! Still I quivered in every nerve to think how slight a sinking of the machinery would precipitate that keen, glistening axe upon my bosom. It was *hope* that prompted the nerve to quiver—the frame to shrink. It was *hope*—the hope that triumphs on the rack—that whispers to the death-condemned even in the dungeons of the Inquisition.

I saw that some ten or twelve vibrations would bring the steel in actual contact with my robe—and with this observation there suddenly came over my spirit all the keen, collected calmness of despair. For the first time during many hours—or perhaps days—I *thought*. It now occurred to me, that the bandage, or surcingle, which enveloped me, was *unique*. I was tied by no separate cord. The first stroke

of the razor-like crescent athwart any portion of the band would so detach it that it might be unwound from my person by means of my left hand. But how fearful, in that case, the proximity of the steel! The result of the slightest struggle, how deadly! Was it likely, moreover, that the minions of the torturer had not foreseen and provided for this possibility? Was it probable that the bandage crossed my bosom in the track of the pendulum? Dreading to find my faint and, as it seemed, my last hope frustrated, I so far elevated my head as to obtain a distinct view of my breast. The surcingle enveloped my limbs and body close in all directions—*save in the path of the destroying crescent.*

Scarcely had I dropped my head back into its original position, when there flashed upon my mind what I cannot better describe than as the unformed half of that idea of deliverance to which I had previously alluded, and of which a moiety only floated indeterminately through my brain when I raised food to my burning lips. The whole thought was now present—feeble, scarcely sane, scarcely definite—but still entire. I proceeded at once, with the nervous energy of despair, to attempt its execution.

For many hours the immediate vicinity of the low framework upon which I lay had been literally swarming with rats. They were wild, bold, ravenous—their red eyes glaring upon me as if they waited but for motionlessness on my part to make me their prey. "To what food," I thought, "have they been accustomed in the well?"

They had devoured, in spite of all my efforts to prevent them, all but a small remnant of the contents of the dish. I had fallen into an habitual see-saw or wave of the hand about the platter; and, at length, the unconscious uniformity of the movement deprived it of effect. In their voracity, the vermin frequently fastened their sharp fangs in my fingers. With the particles of the oily and spicy viand which now remained, I thoroughly rubbed the bandage wherever I could reach it; then, raising my hand from the floor, I lay breathlessly still.

At first, the ravenous animals were startled and terrified at the change—at the cessation of movement. They shrank alarmedly back; many sought the well. But this was only for a moment. I had not counted in vain upon their voracity. Observing that I remained without motion, one or two of the boldest leaped upon the framework, and smelt at the surcingle. This seemed the signal for a general rush. Forth from the well they hurried in fresh troops. They clung to the wood—they overran it, and leaped in hundreds upon my person. The measured movement of the pendulum disturbed them not at all. Avoiding its strokes, they busied themselves with the anointed bandage. They pressed—they swarmed upon me in ever accumulating heaps. They writhed upon my throat; their cold lips sought my own; I was half stifled by their thronging pressure; disgust, for which the world has no name, swelled my bosom, and chilled, with a heavy clamminess, my heart. Yet one minute, and I felt that the struggle would be over. Plainly I perceived the loosening of the bandage. I knew that in more than one place it

must be already severed. With a more than human resolution I lay *still*.

Nor had I erred in my calculations—nor had I endured in vain. I at length felt that I was *free*. The surcingle hung in ribands from my body. But the stroke of the pendulum already pressed upon my bosom. It had divided the serge of the robe. It had cut through the linen beneath. Twice again it swung, and a sharp sense of pain shot through every nerve. But the moment of escape had arrived. At a wave of my hand my deliverers hurried tumultuously away. With a steady movement—cautious, sidelong, shrinking, and slow—I slid from the embrace of the bandage and beyond the reach of the scimitar. For the moment, at least, *I was free*.

Free!—and in the grasp of the Inquisition! I had scarcely stepped from my wooden bed of horror upon the stone floor of the prison, when the motion of the hellish machine ceased, and I beheld it drawn up, by some invisible force, through the ceiling. This was a lesson which I took desperately to heart. My every motion was undoubtedly watched. Free!—I had but escaped death in one form of agony, to be delivered unto worse than death in some other. With that thought I rolled my eyes nervously around on the barriers of iron that hemmed me in. Something unusual — some change which, at first, I could not appreciate distinctly—it was obvious, had taken place in the apartment. For many minutes of a dreamy and trembling abstraction, I busied myself in vain, unconnected conjecture. During this period, I became aware, for the first time, of the origin of the sulphurous light which illumined the cell. It proceeded from a fissure, about half an inch in width, extending entirely around the prison at the base of the walls, which thus appeared, and were completely separated from the floor. I endeavored, but of course in vain, to look through the aperture.

As I arose from the attempt, the mystery of the alteration in the chamber broke at once upon my understanding. I have observed that, although the outlines of the figures upon the walls were sufficiently distinct, yet the colors seemed blurred and indefinite. These colors had now assumed, and were momentarily assuming, a startling and most intense brilliancy, that gave to the spectral and fiendish portraitures an aspect that might have thrilled even firmer nerves than my own. Demon eyes, of a wild and ghastly vivacity, glared upon me in a thousand directions where none had been visible before, and gleamed with the lurid lustre of a fire that I could not force my imagination to regard as unreal.

Unreal!—even while I breathed there came to my nostrils the breath of the vapor of heated iron! A suffocating odor pervaded the prison! A deeper glow settled each moment in the eyes that glared at my agonies! A richer tint of crimson diffused itself over the pictured horrors of blood. I panted! I gasped for breath! There could be no doubt of the design of my tormentors—oh! most unrelenting! oh! most demoniac of men! I shrank from the glowing metal to the centre of the cell. Amid the thought of the fiery destruction that impended, the idea of the coolness of the well came over my

soul like balm. I rushed to its deadly brink. I threw my straining vision below. The glare from the enkindled roof illumined its inmost recesses. Yet, for a wild moment, did my spirit refuse to comprehend the meaning of what I saw. At length it forced—it wrestled its way into my soul—it burned itself in upon my shuddering reason. Oh! for a voice to speak!—oh! horror!—oh! any horror but this! With a shriek, I rushed from the margin, and buried my face in my hands—weeping bitterly.

The heat rapidly increased, and once again I looked up, shuddering as with a fit of the ague. There had been a second change in the cell—and now the change was obviously in the *form*. As before, it was in vain that I at first endeavored to appreciate or understand what was taking place. But not long was I left in doubt. The Inquisitorial vengeance had been hurried by my two-fold escape, and there was to be no more dallying with the King of Terrors. The room had been square. I saw that two of its iron angles were now acute—two, consequently, obtuse. The fearful difference quickly increased with a low rumbling or moaning sound. In an instant the apartment had shifted its form into that of a lozenge. But the alteration stopped not here—I neither hoped nor desired it to stop. I could have clasped the red walls to my bosom as a garment of eternal peace. "Death," I said, "any death but that of the pit!" Fool! might I not have known that *into the pit* it was the object of the burning iron to urge me? Could I resist its glow? or if even that, could I withstand its pressure? And now, flatter and flatter grew the lozenge, with a rapidity that left me no time for contemplation. Its centre, and of course its greatest width, came just over the yawning gulf. I shrank back—but the closing walls pressed me resistlessly onward. At length for my seared and writhing body there was no longer an inch of foothold on the firm floor of the prison. I struggled no more, but the agony of my soul found vent in one loud, long, and final scream of despair. I felt that I tottered upon the brink—I averted my eyes—

There was a discordant hum of human voices! There was a loud blast as of many trumpets! There was a harsh grating as of a thousand thunders! The fiery walls rushed back! An outstretched arm caught my own as I fell, fainting, into the abyss. It was that of General Lasalle. The French army had entered Toledo. The Inquisition was in the hands of its enemies.

Castle Dumburg

No traveller approaches the dismal ruins of the Dumburg without a feeling of involuntary awe. If night happen to overtake him near this melancholy spot, he becomes anxious, he shudders, and shrinking as it were within himself, tries to pass more rapidly along. For when the sun is sunk in the west, and he treads over the site of the ancient castle, he may hear deep sighs, stifled groans, and the rattling of chains from the hollow graves and vaulted passages

below. Then about midnight there will appear to his view, through the thin moonshine, the spirits of those ancient knights who erst swayed with iron sceptre all the trembling land. In fearful fiery guise rise up twelve long white figures out of the mouldering vaults, the ruins of a thousand years, bearing along a gigantic coffin, which they set down upon the old walls and then silently vanish away. Then also the skeletons and skulls scattered along the cliffs may be seen in motion; but not a voice is heard.

Robbers are known to have long haunted the regions of Dumburg, who ravaged the country, and despoiled or murdered poor wayfaring men and merchants whom they met proceeding from Leipsic to Brunswick. These treasures, with those of violated churches and convents, they heaped together and buried in caverns deep underground. The deep wells were filled with corpses of the slain, while the frightful castle precipices were often heard echoing to the groans of dying wretches, dying the worst of deaths, that of hunger; and long did these infernal retreats of the robber chiefs remain undiscovered, till at length they provoked the vengeance of the allied princes of the adjacent districts.

These despoiled treasures—gold, silver, and precious stones—are still said to lie in heaps in some of the secret undiscovered cellars and vaults belonging to Dumburg. Seldom is it permitted the casual passenger to behold them—to find a single entrance, though the long-fallen doorways can yet be traced. Spirits of monkish days, and also real monks, have been more than once seen winding down the silent passages.

One evening a poor woodman, engaged in felling a beech growing behind some of the rocky ruins, saw a grey monk come forth and walk slowly into the forest. The woodman hid himself behind the tree; the monk went by, and then returned towards the caverns. But the rustic was too quick for him: he slipped after him, and watched him standing at a little door which none of the villagers had ever discovered. The monk tapped softly, and said, "Open, little door!" and the door sprang open; "Shut, little door!" and the little door closed. Trembling from head to foot, the woodman had hardly presence of mind enough to mark the spot with some twigs and stones piled upon each other. From this time he could no longer eat nor sleep, such was his curiosity to inspect what it was the cellar contained with the wonderful door.

The next Saturday evening he prepared himself; and when the sun had risen on the ensuing morning, he proceeded with a rosary in his hand towards the identical caverns. Shortly he stood at the door, his teeth chattering in his head; for the ghost in the monk's dress still haunted his fancy. But no ghost appearing, he tapped with trembling hand at the little door, but ventured to say nothing. He first listened, and listened long, but heard nothing.

At length he began to pray with all his heart and strength to all the holy saints, and to the Virgin, and then knocked quickly, without knowing hardly what he did, saying, "Open, little door!" Though his voice was weak and low, yet the door sprang open, and

he saw before him a small twilight passage. He ventured in, and very soon the path brought him to a spacious well-lighted vault. "Shut, little door!" said he, quite unconsciously as before, and the door closed behind him.

He proceeded doubtfully forwards, and beheld large open vessels and bags filled with fine old dollars and heavy gold pieces. Caskets of rich pearls and jewels were also there; very costly tabernacles and heathen images placed upon noble tables, which excited the poor man's utmost astonishment. He crossed himself, and wished he were a thousand miles from the enchanted spot, yet could scarcely resist the temptation of appropriating some portion of these useless treasures, were it only to buy clothing for his poor wife and eight children, who were almost in rags.

Shutting his eyes, he stretched out his hand, and took a few gold pieces from the bag which stood next him; he then felt to see whether his head was still fast upon his shoulders, and at last ventured to open his eyes. Next he proceeded to the dollars, took two handsful, thrust some silver plate under his arm, and turned round to go. "Come again!" cried a hollow voice from the depths of the cavern; the whole place seemed to whirl round with the poor woodman. "Little door, open! Open, little door!" he cried, as he reached the spot in haste. The door opened, and then, "Shut, little door!" he added in a bolder voice, and it closed behind him.

He ran home as fast as his heels could carry him, said nothing about his new fortunes, but piously went to the first convent church, and offered two-tenths of all he had brought with him to be given as alms to the poor. The following morning he went to town, and purchased some new dresses for his wife and children, of which they were much in want. He said he had luckily found, while delving up the roots of a beech-tree, an old dollar and two gold pieces, which he employed to buy them.

On the ensuing Sunday he proceeded with quicker step towards the little door in the cliffs; repeated the former process, filled his pockets fuller than before, and turned to go. "Come again!" cried the same deep voice; and according to invitation, he went the third Sunday, and met with as good a reception as before. He now began to esteem himself a rich man; but what was he to do with his riches? He bestowed two-tenths, to be sure, upon the church and the poor; and he had no resource but to bury the rest over again in his own cellar; applying to it only, like a sensible man, when his family was in want. Still he could not resist his inclination to measure his amount of treasure; for as it happened he had never learnt to count.

So he went to his neighbour's, a thriving wealthy man, but one who pined for more amidst his abundance; garnered up his corn, defrauded his labourers of their just hire, oppressed the widow and the orphan, distrained upon his tenants, though he had no family of his own. From him the woodman borrowed a measure to mete out his gold.

Now, the said bushel had several chinks in it, through which the miser was in the habit when buying to shake a good deal of corn, filling up again

from the poor salesman's heap; and when selling, to shake it back into his own; for he was wealthy, and none ventured to gainsay him. In one of these said chinks some bits of gold happened to stick fast, and escaped the attention of the woodman when he meted out his gold. But on returning the measure, the hawk-eye of the miser was not so easily deceived. Off he went in search of the poor woodman, whom he found at work as usual in the forest. "What were you measuring this morning in my bushel?" was his first salutation. "Chips and beech-nuts, to be sure," was the reply. Shaking his head, the usurer displayed the precious fragments he had found, and at the same time threatened his neighbour with justice and the rack, unless he confessed everything connected with the affair. In this case he promised to reward him, and pressed the woodman so hard that he was compelled to reveal the whole secret, not omitting the fearful words.

From this time forth the vile usurer did nothing but devise methods and consult the woodman how best to transport the whole treasure, at one time, from the hidden places to his own house; and next how to proceed in search of new. He had set his heart upon having the whole; had made his calculations and fixed the manner in which he would purchase daily one hide and one acre after another; or, in default of purchase, to threaten and to swear his neighbours out of their rightful possessions, until he became master over all. In this way he imagined he might soon be able to possess himself of the adjacent villages, and becoming a great lord of the manors, perhaps receive from the emperor letters patent of nobility, and render himself undisputed despot of the country round.

The woodman did not at all approve the idea of his wicked neighbour going in person to the ruined castle. He even entreated him to desist from his design, described the great danger, and illustrated it with a thousand hapless examples of the fate of gold-diggers. But what argument will restrain the hand of avarice from dipping into an open money-bag? By dint of threats and promises, the woodman was induced to bear the miser company as far as the door; farther he would not go. So he was to take his station there, and receive the bags which the usurer proposed to bring out, and to conceal them among the surrounding bushes. He was promised one-half, and the church one-tenth (he would not agree with the woodman for two) for this service, while the village paupers were all to have new clothes. This was all the miser would do; though in fact he had concluded within himself, that the moment he could dispense with the woodman's services, he would find an opportunity of tripping him down the deep well under the castle walls, to give the poor nothing at all, and present the church only with a few light pieces, which he was then weighing in his own mind.

On the next Sunday everything was prepared, and ere sunrise the miser was on his way, with the woodman at his side, towards Dumburg cliffs. On his shoulders he carried a three-bushel sack, with some twenty smaller ones in it, a large grubbing-axe, and a spade. Once more the woodman warned him

earnestly against all such proceedings, but all in vain; he then entreated him to recommend himself to the holy saint; yet all in vain. The wicked miser walked on, grinding his teeth and blaspheming within himself.

They now approached the door, and the woodman, who did not at all like the adventure, but whose fears of the rack were stronger than those of the ghost, kept at as decent a distance as he well could, to receive the sacks. "Open, little door!" cried the corn usurer eagerly, longing to behold the gold. It opened, and in he went. "Shut, little door!" again he said, and the door was shut. Scarcely had he reached the vault, and saw the bags and caskets full of sparkling gold and precious stones, feeding his greedy eyes upon them for a moment, than he seized his sacks, opened one, and began to fill.

Then came, heavy and slow, from the farther end of the cavern, its fiery eyes fixed upon the miser, a huge black hound. It came and lay down, first upon one and then another of the gold-bags, until it had gone over the whole. "Away, thou rapacious man!" sounded in the miser's ears, and the black hound grinned horribly in his face. Half dead with terror, he crept upon his hands and knees towards the door. But in his alarm he forgot to say, "Open, little door;" repeatedly crying out, "Shut the door, shut the door!" thinking of the hound that was slowly following him; and the door remained closed.

Long did the poor woodman with beating heart await the miser's return. At length he approached the door, and thought he could hear stifled sighs and groans, mixed with deep hollow howling, and then all was still. He now heard them ringing for mass at the neighbouring monastery. He crossed himself, took his rosary, and prayed. Then he tapped at the door, "Open," he said, "little door!" and it opened. What a sight! there lay the bleeding body of his bad neighbour, stretched lifeless upon his own sacks; and behold, farther in the cave, the whole array of bags and caskets filled with gold and diamonds began to disappear; down they all went, deeper and deeper, before his eyes, into the bowels of the earth.

Foma, the Wolf

I WAS returning from shooting, alone in a *drochki;* I had still eight versts to go to reach my house. My good mare, who never tires, trotted along the wide dusty road, and from time to time pricked up her ears and gave a stifled neigh; my tired dog followed close to the drochki: one would have thought he was tied to the wheels. A storm was coming up. Opposite me a huge dark cloud arose slowly above the woods; grayish clouds rushed rapidly towards me; the leaves of the willows began to move with a murmur. The heat, stifling up to that time, suddenly lessened, and the atmosphere became cold and damp; it was becoming darker and darker. I struck my horse with the reins, descended into the ravine, crossed successfully the bed of a little dried-up stream the banks of which were covered with brushwood, ascended the opposite side, and entered the woods. The road that I took wound through a thick clump of hazel-trees, in which it was already very dark; I drove along almost at random. My drochki struck at every step against the gnarled roots of old oaks and lindens and sank into the deep ruts made by cart-wheels; my horse began to stumble. A violent wind suddenly sprang up, and rushed roaring through the woods; the spatter of a few large drops of rain was heard on the foliage; lightning flashed through the heavens, and was almost instantly followed by the rolling of thunder. Rain soon fell in torrents. I slackened my speed, and was soon obliged to stop; my horse sank down into the mire, and I could no longer see more than two steps in front of me. However, I succeeded as well as possible in getting under the shelter of a thick bush. Bent double, with my head buried in my cloak, I was waiting patiently for the end of the storm, when by the glare of a flash of lightning I saw just ahead a form arise in the road, and as I looked it stood before me, near the drochki, as if it had risen out of the ground.

"Who are you?" asked a loud voice.

"And who are you?"

"I am the forester."

I told him my name.

"Ah! I know you! You are going home?"

"Yes; but do you hear the storm?"

"It is very heavy," answered the apparition.

But at that moment a vivid flash lighted up the way, and I could distinctly see the person who had accosted me. This sudden flash was immediately followed by a violent clap of thunder, and the rain came down harder than ever.

"It will not end very soon," added the forester.

"What is to be done?"

"If you like, I will take you to my *isba,*" said the forester bruskly.

"You will do me a great service."

"Please keep your seat."

The forester came up to my horse, and taking him by the bridle, led him forward. We started off. I clung on

to the cushion of the drochki, that was rocking to and fro like a boat on a rough sea, and called my dog. My poor mare sank into the mud, crawled out and stumbled at every step; the forester went ahead, now to the right, now to the left of the shafts, and advanced into the darkness like a spectre. After he had gone through a part of the woods in this way, my guide stopped.

"Here we are at my house, master," he said to me quietly.

The kalitka creaked on its hinges, and the little dogs began to bark in chorus in the yard. I looked up, and made out by the light of the flashes a little isba in the middle of a large lot surrounded by a hedge. There was a dim light in one of the narrow windows of this place. The forester led my horse up to the steps, and knocked at the door.

"Coming! coming!" cried a youthful voice; then a pattering of bare feet was heard. The bolt was drawn, and a little girl of twelve at the most, in a short sacque drawn in at the waist by a cord, appeared on the threshold, a lantern in her hand.

"Hold the light for the master," my host said to her, "and I will put the drochki under the shed."

The little girl looked at me, and went into the isba. I followed her.

The forester's home consisted of a single room; and a wretched room it was. It was low, smoky, and without the utensils that one usually sees in a peasant's hut; there were neither partitions nor lofts. A ragged touloupe hung on the wall; beyond, on the bench, was a gun, and a quantity of rags were heaped up in the corner. Two large pots placed near the stove completed the furniture that was made visible by the flicker of a *loutchina* burning on the table. In the middle of the room was a cradle fastened at the end of a long pole. The little girl put out the lantern, sat down on a stool, and began to swing the cradle with one hand while reviving the flame of the loutchina with the other. I looked about the room; the sight that I saw affected me deeply. There is nothing sadder than the interior of a peasant's isba at night. The child in the cradle was breathing painfully.

"You are alone here?" I asked the little girl.

"Yes, I am alone," she answered in a weak, timid voice.

"Are you the forester's daughter?"

"Yes," she stammered.

The door opened with a creak, and the forester, stooping in order to cross the threshold, entered the room. He took the lantern that was on the ground, and brought it to the table in order to light a candle that was there.

"You probably are not accustomed to the loutchina?" he said to me, throwing back his hair.

I examined him attentively, and his appearance impressed me. He was a tall man, broad-shouldered, with a figure such as one seldom sees. The muscles of his chest and brawny arms stood out beneath the folds of his thick shirt, which was dripping with water. A thick black beard covered the whole lower part of his stern, manly face; his bold, dark, half-open eyes were shaded by well-formed eyebrows that almost met. He stopped before me, with his hands on his hips.

I thanked him and asked him his name.

"My name is Foma," he answered me, "and I am called Birouk (The Wolf)."

"Ah! you are Birouk?"

I looked at him with redoubled interest. I had often heard the forester Birouk spoken of by Jermolai and other inhabitants of the country. The peasants feared him as they did fire. There was never a man, they said, who fulfilled the duties that were confided to him with so much vigilance; he would not let them take away the slightest bit of a fagot; at all hours of the day, and even in the middle of the night, he fell on them with the suddenness of a snow-squall, and there was no resisting him; he was strong and quick as the evil one. There was no way of bribing him; neither brandy nor money had any effect on him; nothing could seduce him. Many times already had they charitably tried to send him into another world; but they had utterly failed.

Such was Birouk's reputation with the peasants of the neighborhood.

"Then you are Birouk?" I said to him. "I have often heard you spoken of, brother. They claim that you are pitiless."

"I do my duty," he answered abruptly; "one is not only to eat his master's bread but to earn it."

He took the hatchet that hung at his belt, sat on the ground, and began to make a loutchina.

"Have you no wife?" I asked him.

"No," he answered, giving a heavy blow with his hatchet.

"She is dead, then?"

"No—yes—she is dead," he replied; and he turned away.

I was silent. He raised his head and looked at me.

"She ran away with a passing bourgeois," he said to me with a ferocious smile. At these words the little girl looked down. The child awoke and began to cry. The little girl went up to the cradle. "Here! take it," said Birouk to her, holding out a nursing-bottle covered with dirt. "Look there! she deserted it," he continued in a low voice, pointing to the child. Then he went to the door; but he stopped and turned to me.

"You would doubtless not care for our bread, master?" he said to me. "And that's all we have."

"I am not hungry."

"Just as you like. I would indeed start up the samovar, but I have no tea. I will go and look after your horse."

He went out, slamming the door after him. Again I began to examine the interior of the isba; it seemed sadder than before. That acrid odor that is peculiar to places where smoke stays for any length of time choked me. The little girl stood motionless with downcast eyes; only from time to time she pushed the cradle, timidly pulling up her frock on her shoulder; her bare legs hung down at the side of the stool.

"What is your name?" I asked her.

"Oulita," she said, bending down her thin face still farther.

The forester came back and sat down on the bench. "The storm is quieting down," he said to me after an instant's silence. "If you wish, I will show you the way out of the woods."

I arose. Birouk took up his gun and began to examine the lock.

"Why do you take it?" I asked him.

"There is mischief going on in the woods yonder. Some one is cutting down a tree in the Mare's ravine."

"How can you hear it from here?"

"Not from here, but in the yard."

We went out together. The rain had entirely ceased. A thick curtain of clouds stretched across the horizon, but above us the heavens were dark blue, and stars here and there twinkled through the rain-clouds that were flying by. One could already distinguish the form of the trees that the wind had just struck with such fury. We listened. The forester took off his hat and bent down his head.

"There, there it is," he said to me suddenly, stretching out his hand. "They have chosen a fine night for their work!"

I listened in vain. I could only make out the rustling of the leaves. Birouk took my horse out of the shed.

"If we do not hurry," he said to me, "I shall miss them."

"I will go with you. Are you willing?"

"All right," he said, taking back the horse. "We shall soon take them; then I will show you the way. Come!"

We started off. Birouk went ahead, and I followed close behind him. I really cannot tell how he found his way through the trees and brushwood, but he walked along rapidly without hesitation, and stopped now and then to listen to the blows of the axe.

"Listen!" he said between his teeth. "Do you hear? do you hear now?"

"In which direction?"

The forester shrugged his shoulders.

We entered the ravine. When we were out of the wind I could hear the blows of the axe very distinctly. Birouk looked at me, and nodded his head. We continued our way, walking through the ferns and the nettles. I heard a loud prolonged crackling.

"He has cut it down!" muttered Birouk.

It was clearing off, and we could see about us in the woods. We at last came to the end of the ravine.

"Wait for me here," said the forester in a low voice; and cocking his gun, he stooped down and disappeared through the bushes.

I listened attentively; in spite of the howling of the wind I could make out the somewhat feeble sounds that arose at a little distance from the place where I stood. Some one was cutting the branches of a tree with an axe; then I heard the breathing of a horse and the harsh squeak from the wheels of a téléga. "Where are you going? Stop!" Birouk cried suddenly in a thundering voice. These words were followed by a cry plaintive as a hare's. A struggle was about to take place. "No! no!" repeated Birouk breathlessly. "You will not get away from me." I rushed towards them, and after more than one stumble I came to the place of the combat. The forester was stretched on the ground at the foot of a fallen tree; he held the struggling robber under him, and was trying to bind his hands with a belt. I rushed up to them. The peasant was in rags, and wet to the skin; a long dishevelled beard gave a most sinister look to his face. Birouk stood up, and forced his prisoner to do the same. A gaunt horse, covered with a ragged mat, and a téléga were a few steps off in the thicket. The forester was silent; the

peasant was also silent, but was shaking his head.

"Let him go in peace," I whispered in Birouk's ear; "I will pay the price of the tree."

Birouk did not answer; he seized the horse's mane with his left hand (he had slipped his right through the thief's belt).

"Come, turn round, *crow*," he said roughly.

"There's my little axe yonder; take it," stammered the peasant.

"It must not be lost, of course," replied the forester, taking up the axe.

We started off. I walked behind. As we went along, a few drops of rain warned us that the storm was not over; and very soon, indeed, it was raining in torrents. It was not without trouble that we succeeded in getting back to the forester's. When we reached there, Birouk left the horse in the middle of the yard; and leading the peasant into the isba, untied the knot of the kouchack that held his hands, and made him sit down in the corner. I sat opposite him on the bench.

"What a pour!" the forester said to me. "You must wait until it passes over. Would you not like to lie down for a while?"

"No, thanks."

"I would have put him in the little side room so as not to inconvenience you," he said to me, pointing to the peasant; "but the latch—"

"Let him stay where he is; he does not disturb me," I answered.

The peasant looked at me without lifting his head. I firmly resolved to set the poor devil free at whatever cost. He sat motionless on the bench where Birouk had placed him on coming in. The light of the lantern gave me a good view of him, and I looked at him more attentively. He had a thin wrinkled face, colorless eyebrows, a restless look, and his limbs were frightfully thin. The little girl stretched herself at his feet on the floor. As to Birouk, he was seated before the table, with his head in his hands. A cricket sang in the corner; the rain beat against the roof and the shutters. We were all silent.

"Foma Kousmitch," said the peasant suddenly in a dull broken voice, "Foma Kousmitch."

"What do you want?"

"Let me go."

Birouk did not answer.

"Let me go. I am miserable. Let me go."

"I know you," said the forester with a gloomy air. "You are all alike; each of you is a bigger rogue than the other."

"Let me go," answered the peasant. "The steward—we are ruined; yes, utterly ruined. Let me go."

"Ruined? That's no reason why you should steal."

"Let me go, Foma Kousmitch. Do not destroy us. You know well what awaits me. The steward will devour me; indeed he will!"

Birouk turned away. The peasant shivered every now and then as if he had a fever. He also moved his head in a strange way and breathed very quickly.

"Let me go," he continued to repeat with an accent of despair. "Let me go; in the name of God, let me go! I will pay you, as there is a God. Yes, we are miserable. The children are crying at home; you know that well.

How can one help it? this life is so hard!"

"That's a poor excuse; that's no reason why you should steal."

"If you'll only leave me my poor horse," said the peasant; "at least leave me my horse. He is all I have. Don't take him away from me."

"It can't be; I have already told you so. I also have my duties to do; I must be severe with such as you."

"Let me go. I am wretched, Foma Kousmitch; I am miserable, as true as I live!"

"I know you."

"Let me go, in heaven's name!"

"Come, will you stop this? You know well I am not joking. There's a seigneur there; don't you see him?"

The poor devil hung his head. Birouk began to yawn and to lean his brow against the table. It was still raining. I awaited impatiently the end of this sad scene.

The peasant suddenly stood up; his eyes sparkled and the color mounted to his livid cheeks. "Come! here," he cried, with his eyes half shut and his lips quivering with hate, "devour me, cursed assassin! drink the blood of a Christian; drink it!"

The forester turned away.

"I am speaking to you," continued the peasant; "you, *Asiatic;* drinker of blood, you!"

"Have you lost your mind?" said the forester. "I believe rather you are drunk."

"Drunk? I have not become drunk at your expense, have I? cursed slayer of souls! ferocious beast!"

"I will teach you."

"Don't talk to me! What do I care? I am desperate. What do you think will become of me without a horse? Kill me; I had rather have it over at once than die of hunger. Let us all perish at once—my wife, my children! As to you, never fear; we shall meet you again."

Birouk arose.

"Strike! strike me!" resumed the peasant with rage. "Strike! Come, strike me, then!"

At these words the little girl, who was lying down, started up.

"Silence!" cried the forester in a thundering voice, and he made a step forward.

"Come, let him go, Foma," I cried in my turn. "He won't trouble you."

"I will not keep still!" resumed the unfortunate man with more violence than ever. "I might as well be knocked in the head now as not. You are a slayer of souls, a ferocious beast! But wait; you will not reign much longer. You will be strung up by the neck, you may be sure of that!"

Birouk seized him by the shoulder. I ran to the peasant's help.

"Let him alone, master!" the forester cried to me.

This injunction did not frighten me, and I had already stretched out my hands, when, to my great astonishment, Birouk suddenly untied the kouchack that bound the peasant's arms, and seizing him by the neck he thrust his cap over his eyes, opened the door, and pushed him out.

"Go to the devil, you and your horse!" he cried out as he saw him go away, "and beware if I ever catch you again."

As he said this, the forester quietly

went into his isba, shut the door, and began to move something about in a corner.

"Really, Birouk," I said to him, "you astonished me. You are a worthy man. As I regard—"

"Come, master, we won't speak of that," he answered impatiently. "But don't go and talk about it. I will now show you the way, for it doesn't look as if it would stop raining very soon. Ah, there he is going off!" he added in a low voice, as he heard the noise that the wheels of a téléga made as it passed before the windows of the isba. "Ah! I—"

Half an hour after I took leave of him on the edge of the woods.

The Lock Lady

Near the little city of Guntersberg, upon the Lower Hartz, is a mountain known by the name of Kohlberg. Vestiges of a castle are still to be seen, said to have been called Guntersberg, which it is not considered safe to visit at certain hours of the night.

There is a castle spectre haunting the place called the Lock Lady, that lies in ambush, and is very fond of beguiling the more inquisitive passengers by some tempting offer.

In former times a knight of the name of Bodo bore sway over its domain. He was a wild and dissipated character, and stood conspicuous at once as a robber and a reveller among neighbours of the same stamp, and there were few who could boast of having cleared the passes of the Hartz without paying a pretty heavy toll. He was particularly apt to entrap the most lovely maidens he could meet with, or to inveigle them into his castle, where he shut them up, but wherefore the tradition does not tell.

Indeed, this last fancy Bodo carried a little too far, insomuch that he was generally characterized by the name of the Maidnapper. No sensible girl any longer ventured to go the usual road, but preferred taking a more safe direction, though a pretty wide circuit round.

All this came to the ears of a great necromancer, who dwelt in a cave among the rocks and dark fir woods that surrounded the knight's domain. He was a mighty master of his art, and availed himself of all nature's powers when he entered upon any favourite pursuit. Luckily, however, he only exercised his skill in laudable efforts, and was very fond of giving wicked spirits a stroke with his magic rod. He had his eye upon Bodo. "Stop a little, sir," he said, "and your pranks shall have an end."

So he took his station in the wood right over against the castle, and there he watched for a favourable occasion of catching the knight tripping in some fox trick or other. He waited, however, a good while in vain; for passengers, and in particular the young maidens, had become more wary, and seldom went the same way, as we have said. At length, however, there came a certain chapman and dealer, from Norhausen, who was on his way to the fair at Quedlenburg. He was seated

upon his mule, and at his side rode his daughter, very properly and cautiously attired in a boy's dress. The sun had scarcely risen over the hills, and the old merchant was just beginning to flatter himself that he must be too early for Sir Bodo to be stirring abroad, and at all events he thought his pretty Iduna would not be known.

But hardly had the castle warder spied them from the watch-tower before he blew a blast upon his horn to denote that booty was near at hand.

Bodo instantly set forth down the hill-side, with his lusty train. Iduna shrieked with fear at the sight; her voice, her fainting, all betrayed her disguise, and she was secured. Laughing at his triumph, Bodo permitted the old man to count out his money, piece after piece, in order to ransom his only daughter. Bodo had the cruelty to take both; and then turning to him, said, "Make haste, thou old fool, and get thee away! thank thy stars that thou art yet alive!"

Without further parley the poor girl was carried into the castle. The robber stood exulting over his defenceless prey, delighted at the idea of having made so successful a prize, having been much disappointed of late.

"Awake, lady," he exclaimed, "I pray thee awake." But the unhappy innocent lay still insensible before him. Yet even this had availed her nothing; when suddenly a clap of thunder resounded through every room in the lofty castle. The earth trembled and shook more and more, till the mountain beneath opened and engulfed the whole stately edifice, amidst a deep and hideous din.

This was the work of the necromancer. He had witnessed Sir Bodo's proceeding with the utmost indignation, and he took singular pleasure in punishing this robber's treachery when he was just on the point of perpetrating another crime. To the innocent girl, however, he granted that on certain days she might return and walk the earth, since when she is to be seen arrayed in white, with a bunch of keys at her side and a nosegay in her hand, and she is hence called the Lock Lady. When she meets with any solitary wanderer near her domain, if he should happen to pronounce her name, she will appear and offer him some token, which it is not always safe to take.

There was a certain monk belonging to a neighbouring monastery, who once heard of her appointed visits to this place. Curiosity, and perhaps some other motive, induced him to watch for her appearance to learn whether she were really corporeal or spiritual. At all events it was a female spirit; and he seated himself upon the old walls, patiently awaiting her visit; but she came not. "Is it so?" thought he; "but come you must!" And with that he drew forth his ell-wand, a potent conjuring-rod, and began to describe infernal circles upon the earth, loudly conjuring her at the same time to appear. In the wink of an eye she stood close to him. "What would you have?" she cried, with no very friendly voice.

The monk, somewhat astounded, at first drew back; but not being easily put out of countenance, rallied his spirits: he smiled and looked kindly at her, entreated her to sit down by him, to give him a few handsful of gold and some precious stones, as she must somewhere have a rich store. Saying this, he attempted with a polite and

tender air to seize one of her soft white hands. But the Lock Lady revolted at such familiarity, unloosing her bunch of keys from her side, smote the amorous monk so sharply about the head, that he was glad to secure his magic wand, and make his escape down the mountain with only a few bruises.

Her manners were more gentle, however, on other occasions. A young shepherd happened to be pasturing his flock among the grass-grown ruins of the castle; while idly stretched upon the ground he amused himself with thinking of the young Lock Lady. He looked up, and beheld her standing only a few steps from him, with a bunch of flowers in her hand, which she seemed to be weaving into a nosegay. With perfect self-possession our young hero watched what she would next do, until one of her flowers happening to fall out of her hand, he sprang up, seized the flower, and after pressing it to his lips, he stuck it into his bonnet, and drawing a step or two back, modestly addressed her: "Lady, have you lost the flower? behold, here it is." The young Lock Lady gave no reply, but she beckoned him to follow, and the young shepherd, taking off his hat with the flower in it, obeyed her. They proceeded about a hundred yards in silence, when suddenly the ground opened under the lady's feet, and down she went. As boldly went the shepherd after her, and deep and deeper they continued to descend through the dark hollow earth. When they had got about a hundred fathoms deep, in a moment it grew bright as day, and a magnificent castle rose before the eyes of the astonished hind. There were towers and beautiful chambers all sparkling with gold and silver, with a splendid glow of precious stones, and the most costly pearls and diamonds in all the earth. The youth clasped his hands in an ecstacy of joy, and gazed enraptured upon the beauty and glory of the under world.

But the lady had disappeared, while the shepherd, imagining he could not have been conveyed thither for nothing, opened his scrip, threw its contents away, and began to fill it with the more precious materials he saw around. He next stuffed the whole of his pockets and all the crevices and corners of his garments quite full. He did not even forget his hat, which he heaped over with precious stones, in which process, however, he lost his flower. His increasing desire to secure the most costly treasures he could left him no time to notice it; nor did he hear in an adjoining room a soft voice which uttered, "Alas! forget not the least of all;" but, regardless of the voice, he hastened well loaded away.

Again the voice repeated its warning in a louder tone; yet now, full of fear and anxiety to secure the treasure he had won, he stopped not, but hastened faster and faster from the place. Speedily did he regain the entrance into the abyss, the light of heaven again burst upon his eyes, he breathed more freely, and the cavity closed behind him with a hideous din.

Quite exhausted, he threw himself upon the ground, and, for the first time, perceived that he had lost the beautiful flower. He looked round, and sought for it everywhere in vain. It was gone to appear no more; though the whole of his treasure turned out in this instance to be something better than dross.

The Fury

THE day had scarcely dawned. Over Vesuvius hung one broad gray stripe of mist, stretching across as far as Naples, and darkening all the small towns along the coast. The sea lay calm. Along the shore of the narrow creek that lies beneath the Sorrento cliffs, fishermen and their wives were at work already, some with giant cables drawing their boats to land, with the nets that had been cast the night before, while others were rigging their craft, trimming the sails, or fetching out oars and masts from the great grated vaults that have been built deep into the rocks for shelter to the tackle overnight. Nowhere an idle hand; even the very aged, who had long given up going to sea, fell into the long chain of those who were hauling in the nets. Here and there, on some flat housetop, an old woman stood and spun, or busied herself about her grandchildren, whom their mother had left to help her husband.

"Do you see, Rachela? yonder is our padre curato," said one to a little thing of ten, who brandished a small spindle by her side; "Antonio is to row him over to Capri. Madre Santissima! but the reverend signore's eyes are dull with sleep!" and she waved her hand to a benevolent-looking little priest, who was settling himself in the boat, and spreading out upon the bench his carefully tucked-up skirts.

The men upon the quay had dropped their work to see their pastor off, who bowed and nodded kindly right and left.

"What for must he go to Capri, granny?" asked the child. "Have the people there no priest of their own, that they must borrow ours?"

"Silly thing!" returned the granny. "Priests they have in plenty—and the most beautiful of churches, and a hermit too, which is more than we have. But there lives a great signora, who once lived here; she was so very ill! Many's the time our padre had to go and take the Most Holy to her, when they thought she could not live the night. But with the Blessed Virgin's help she got strong and well, and was able to bathe every day in the sea. When she went away, she left a fine heap of ducats behind her for our church, and for the poor; and she would not go, they say, until our padre promised to go and see her over there, that she might confess to him as before. It is quite wonderful, the store she lays by him! Indeed, and we have cause to bless ourselves for having a curato who has gifts enough for an archbishop, and is in such request with all the great folks. The Madonna be with him!" she cried, and waved her hand again, as the boat was about to put from shore.

"Are we to have fair weather, my son?" inquired the little priest, with an anxious look toward Naples.

"The sun is not yet up," the young man answered; "when he comes, he will easily do for that small trifle of mist."

"Off with you, then! that we may arrive before the heat."

Antonio was just reaching for his

long oar to shove away the boat, when suddenly he paused, and fixed his eyes upon the summit of the steep path that leads down from Sorrento to the water. A tall and slender girlish figure had become visible upon the heights, and was now hastily stepping down the stones, waving her handkerchief. She had a small bundle under her arm, and her dress was mean and poor. Yet she had a distinguished if somewhat savage way of throwing back her head, and the dark tress wreathed around it was like a diadem.

"What have we to wait for?" inquired the curato.

"There is some one coming who wants to go to Capri—with your permission, padre. We shall not go a whit the slower. It is a slight young thing, but just eighteen."

At that moment the young girl appeared from behind the wall that bounds the winding path.

"Laurella!" cried the priest; "and what has she to do in Capri?"

Antonio shrugged his shoulders. She came up with hasty steps, her eyes fixed straight before her.

"Ha! l'Arrabiata! good-morning!" shouted one or two of the young boatmen. But for the curato's presence, they might have added more; the look of mute defiance with which the young girl received their welcome appeared to tempt the more mischievous among them.

"Good-day, Laurella!" now said the priest; "how are you? Are you coming with us to Capri?"

"If I may, padre."

"Ask Antonio there; the boat is his. Every man is master of his own, I say, as God is master of us all."

"There is half a carlino, if I may go for that?" said Laurella, without looking at the young boatman.

"You need it more than I," he muttered, and pushed aside some orange baskets to make room: he was to sell the oranges in Capri, which little isle of rocks has never been able to grow enough for all its visitors.

"I do not choose to go for nothing," said the girl, with a slight frown of her dark eyebrows.

"Come, child," said the priest; "he is a good lad, and had rather not enrich himself with that little morsel of your poverty. Come, now, and step in," and he stretched out his hand to help her, "and sit you down by me. See, now, he has spread his jacket for you, that you may sit the softer. Young folks are all alike; for one little maiden of eighteen they will do more than for ten of us reverend fathers. Nay, no excuse, Tonino. It is the Lord's own doing, that like and like should hold together."

Meantime Laurella had stepped in, and seated herself beside the padre, first putting away Antonio's jacket without a word. The young fellow let it lie, and, muttering between his teeth, he gave one vigorous push against the pier, and the little boat flew out into the open bay.

"What are you carrying there in that little bundle?" inquired the padre, as they were floating on over the calm sea, now just beginning to be lighted up with the earliest rays of the rising sun.

"Silk, thread, and a loaf, padre. The silk is to be sold at Anacapri, to a woman who makes ribbons, and the thread to another."

"Spun by yourself?"

"Yes, sir."

"You once learned to weave ribbons yourself, if I remember right?"

"I did, sir; but mother has been much worse, and I cannot stay so long from home; and we are not rich enough to buy a loom to ourselves."

"Worse, is she? Ah! dear, dear! when I was with you last, at Easter, she was up."

"The spring is always her worst time. Ever since those last great storms, and the earthquakes, she has been forced to keep her bed from pain."

"Pray, my child. Never slacken your prayers and petitions that the Blessed Virgin may intercede for you; and be industrious and good, that your prayers may find a hearing."

After a pause: "When you were coming toward the shore, I heard them calling after you. 'Good-morning, l'Arrabiata!' they said. What made them call you so? It is not a nice name for a young Christian maiden, who should be meek and mild."

The young girl's brown face glowed all over, while her eyes flashed fire.

"They always mock me so, because I do not dance and sing, and stand about to chatter, as other girls do. I might be left in peace, I think; I do *them* no harm."

"Nay, but you might be civil. Let others dance and sing, on whom this life sits lighter; but a kind word now and then is seemly even from the most afflicted."

Her dark eyes fell, and she drew her eyebrows closer over them, as if she would have hidden them.

They went on a while in silence. The sun now stood resplendent above the mountain chain; only the tip of Mount Vesuvius towered beyond the group of clouds that had gathered about its base; and on the Sorrento plains the houses were gleaming white from the dark green of their orange gardens.

"Have you heard no more of that painter, Laurella?" asked the curato—"that Neapolitan, who wished so much to marry you?" She shook her head. "He came to make a picture of you. Why would you not let him?"

"What did he want it for? There are handsomer girls than I. Who knows what he would have done with it? He might have bewitched me with it, or hurt my soul, or even killed me, mother says."

"Never believe such sinful things!" said the little curato, very earnestly. "Are not you ever in God's keeping, without whose will not one hair of your head can fall? and is one poor mortal with an image in his hand to prevail against the Lord? Besides, you might have seen that he was fond of you; else why should he want to marry you?"

She said nothing.

"And wherefore did you refuse him? He was an honest man, they say, and comely; and he would have kept you and your mother far better than you ever can yourself, for all your spinning and silk-winding."

"We are so poor!" she said passionately; "and mother has been ill so long, we should have become a burden to him. And then I never should have done for a signora. When his friends came to see him, he would only have been ashamed of me."

"How can you say so? I tell you the

man was good and kind; he would even have been willing to settle in Sorrento. It will not be so easy to find another, sent straight from heaven to be the saving of you, as this man, indeed, appeared to be."

"I want no husband—I never shall," she said, very stubbornly, half to herself.

"Is this a vow? or do you mean to be a nun?"

She shook her head.

"The people are not so wrong who call you wilful, although the name they give you is not kind. Have you ever considered that you stand alone in the world, and that your perverseness must make your sick mother's illness worse to bear, her life more bitter? And what sound reason can you have to give for rejecting an honest hand, stretched out to help you and your mother? Answer me, Laurella."

"I have a reason," she said reluctantly, and speaking low; "but it is one I cannot give."

"Not give! not give to me? not to your confessor, whom you surely know to be your friend—or is he not?"

Laurella nodded.

"Then, child, unburden your heart. If your reason be a good one, I shall be the very first to uphold you in it. Only you are young, and know so little of the world. A time may come when you will find cause to regret a chance of happiness thrown away for some foolish fancy now."

Shyly she threw a furtive glance over to the other end of the boat, where the young boatman sat, rowing fast. His woollen cap was pulled deep down over his eyes; he was gazing far across the water, with averted head, sunk, as it appeared, in his own meditations.

The priest observed her look, and bent his ear down closer.

"You did not know my father?" she whispered, while a dark look gathered in her eyes.

"Your father, child! Why, your father died when you were ten years old. What can your father (Heaven rest his soul in paradise!) have to do with this present perversity of yours?"

"You did not know him, padre; you did not know that mother's illness was caused by him alone."

"And how?"

"By his ill-treatment of her; he beat her and trampled upon her. I well remember the nights when he came home in his fits of frenzy. She never said a word, and did everything he bade her. Yet he would beat her so, my heart felt ready to break. I used to cover up my head and pretend to be asleep, but I cried all night. And then, when he saw her lying on the floor, quite suddenly he would change, and lift her up and kiss her, till she screamed and said he smothered her. Mother forbade me ever to say a word of this; but it wore her out. And in all these long years since father died, she has never been able to get well again. And if she should soon die—which God forbid! —I know who it was that killed her."

The little curato's head wagged slowly to and fro; he seemed uncertain how far to acquiesce in the young girl's reasons. At length he said: "Forgive him, as your mother has forgiven! And turn your thoughts from such distressing pictures, Laurella; there may be better days in store for you, which will make you forget the past."

"Never shall I forget that!" she said, and shuddered. "And you must know, padre, it is the reason why I have resolved to remain unmarried. I never will be subject to a man, who may beat and then caress me. Were a man now to want to beat or kiss me, I could defend myself; but mother could not—neither from his blows nor kisses—because she loved him. Now, I will never so love a man as to be made ill and wretched by him."

"You are but a child, and you talk like one who knows nothing at all of life. Are all men like that poor father of yours? Do all ill-treat their wives, and give vent to every whim and gust of passion? Have you never seen a good man yet? or know good wives, who live in peace and harmony with their husbands?"

"But nobody ever knew how father was to mother; she would have died sooner than complain or tell of him, and all because she loved him. If this be love—if love can close our lips when they should cry out for help—if it is to make us suffer without resistance, worse than even our worst enemy could make us suffer—then, I say, I never will be fond of mortal man."

"I tell you you are childish; you know not what you are saying. When your time comes, you are not likely to be consulted whether you choose to fall in love or not." After a pause, he added, "And that painter: did you think he could have been cruel?"

"He made those eyes I have seen my father make, when he begged my mother's pardon and took her in his arms to make it up. I know those eyes. A man may make such eyes, and yet find it in his heart to beat a wife who never did a thing to vex him! It made my flesh creep to see those eyes again."

After this she would not say another word. The curato also remained silent. He bethought himself of more than one wise saying, wherewith the maiden might have been admonished; but he refrained, in consideration of the young boatman, who had been growing rather restless toward the close of this confession.

When, after two hours' rowing, they reached the little bay of Capri, Antonio took the padre in his arms, and carried him through the last few ripples of shallow water, to set him reverently down upon his legs on dry land. But Laurella did not wait for him to wade back and fetch her. Gathering up her little petticoat, holding in one hand her wooden shoes and in the other her little bundle, with one splashing step or two she had reached the shore. "I have some time to stay at Capri," said the priest. "You need not wait—I may not perhaps return before to-morrow. When you get home, Laurella, remember me to your mother; I will come and see her within the week. You mean to go back before it gets dark?"

"If I find an opportunity," answered the girl, turning all her attention to her skirts.

"I must return, you know," said Antonio, in a tone which he believed to be one of great indifference. "I shall wait here till the Ave Maria. If you should not come, it is the same to me."

"You must come," interposed the little priest; "you never can leave your mother all alone at night. Is it far you have to go?"

"To a vineyard by Anacapri."

"And I to Capri. So now God bless you, child—and you, my son."

Laurella kissed his hand, and let one farewell drop, for the padre and Antonio to divide between them. Antonio, however, appropriated no part of it to himself; he pulled off his cap exclusively to the padre, without even looking at Laurella. But after they had turned their backs, he let his eyes travel but a short way with the padre, as he went toiling over the deep bed of small, loose stones; he soon sent them after the maiden, who, turning to the right, had begun to climb the heights, holding one hand above her eyes to protect them from the scorching sun. Just before the path disappeared behind high walls, she stopped, as if to gather breath, and looked behind her. At her feet lay the marina; the rugged rocks rose high around her; the sea was shining in the rarest of its deep-blue splendour. The scene was surely worth a moment's pause. But, as chance would have it, her eyes, in glancing past Antonio's boat, met Antonio's own, which had been following her as she climbed.

Each made a slight movement, as persons do who would excuse themselves for some mistake; and then, with her darkest look, the maiden went her way.

Hardly one hour had passed since noon, and yet for the last two Antonio had been sitting waiting on the bench before the fishers' tavern. He must have been very much preoccupied with something, for he jumped up every moment to step out into the sunshine, and look carefully up and down the roads, which, parting right and left, lead to the only two little towns upon the island. He did not altogether trust the weather, he then said to the hostess of the osteria; to be sure, it was clear enough, but he did not quite like that tint of sea and sky. Just so it had looked, he said, before the last awful storm, when the English family had been so nearly lost; surely she must remember it?

No, indeed, she said, she didn't.

Well, if the weather should happen to change before night, she was to think of him, he said.

"Have you many fine folk over there?" she asked him, after a while.

"They are only just beginning; as yet, the season has been bad enough; those who came to bathe, came late."

"The spring came late. Have you not been earning more than we at Capri?"

"Not enough to give me macaroni twice a week, if I had had nothing but the boat—only a letter now and then to take to Naples, or a gentleman to row out into the open sea, that he might fish. But you know I have an uncle who is rich; he owns more than one fine orange-garden; and, 'Tonino,' says he to me, 'while I live you shall not suffer want; and when I am gone you will find that I have taken care of you.' And so, with God's help, I got through the winter."

"Has he children, this uncle who is rich?"

"No, he never married; he was long in foreign parts, and many a good piastre he has laid together. He is going to set up a great fishing business, and set me over it, to see the rights of it."

"Why, then you are a made man, Tonino!"

The young boatman shrugged his shoulders. "Every man has his own burden," said he, starting up again to

have another look at the weather, turning his eyes right and left, although he must have known that there can be no weather-side but one.

"Let me fetch you another bottle," said the hostess; "your uncle can well afford to pay for it."

"Not more than one glass; it is a fiery wine you have in Capri, and my head is hot already."

"It does not heat the blood; you may drink as much of it as you like. And here is my husband coming; so you must sit awhile, and talk to him."

And in fact, with his nets over his shoulder, and his red cap upon his curly head, down came the comely padrone of the osteria. He had been taking a dish of fish to that great lady, to set before the little curato. As soon as he caught sight of the young boatman, he began waving him a most cordial welcome; and he came to sit beside him on the bench, chattering and asking questions. Just as his wife was bringing her second bottle of pure unadulterated Capri, they heard the crisp sand crunch, and Laurella was seen approaching from the left-hand road to Anacapri. She nodded slightly in salutation; then stopped, and hesitated.

Antonio sprang from his seat. "I must go," he said. "It is a young Sorrento girl, who came over with the signor curato in the morning. She has to get back to her sick mother before night."

"Well, well, time enough yet before night," observed the fisherman; "time enough to take a glass of wine. Wife, I say, another glass!"

"I thank you; I had rather not"; and Laurella kept her distance.

"Fill the glasses, wife; fill them both, I say; she only wants a little pressing."

"Don't," interposed the lad. "It is a wilful head of her own she has; a saint could not persuade her to do what she does not choose." And, taking a hasty leave, he ran down to the boat, loosened the rope, and stood waiting for Laurella. Again she bent her head to the hostess, and slowly approached the water, with lingering steps. She looked around on every side, as if in hopes of seeing some other passenger. But the marina was deserted. The fishermen were asleep, or rowing about the coast with rods or nets; a few women and children sat before their doors, spinning or sleeping; such strangers as had come over in the morning were waiting for the cool of the evening to return. She had not time to look about her long; before she could prevent him, Antonio had seized her in his arms and carried her to the boat, as if she had been an infant. He leaped in after her, and with a stroke or two of his oar they were in deep water.

She had seated herself at the end of the boat, half turning her back to him, so that he could only see her profile. She wore a sterner look than ever; the low, straight brow was shaded by her hair; the rounded lips were firmly closed; only the delicate nostril occasionally gave a wilful quiver. After they had gone on a while in silence, she began to feel the scorching of the sun; and, unloosening her bundle, she threw the handkerchief over her head, and began to make her dinner of the bread; for in Capri she had eaten nothing.

Antonio did not stand this long; he fetched out a couple of the oranges with which the baskets had been filled in the morning. "Here is something to eat

with your bread, Laurella," he said. "Don't think I kept them for you; they had rolled out of the basket, and I only found them when I brought the baskets back to the boat."

"Eat them yourself; bread is enough for me."

"They are refreshing in this heat, and you have had to walk so far."

"They gave me a drink of water, and that refreshed me."

"As you please," he said, and let them drop into the basket.

Silence again. The sea was smooth as glass. Not a ripple was heard against the prow. Even the white sea-birds that roost among the caves of Capri pursued their prey with soundless flight.

"You might take the oranges to your mother," again commenced Tonino.

"We have oranges at home; and when they are gone, I can go and buy some more."

"Nay, take these to her, and give them to her with my compliments."

"She does not know you."

"You could tell her who I am."

"I do not know you, either."

It was not the first time that she had denied him thus. One Sunday of last year, when that painter had first come to Sorrento, Antonio had chanced to be playing *boccia* with some other young fellows in the little piazza by the chief street.

There, for the first time, had the painter caught sight of Laurella, who, with her pitcher on her head, had passed by without taking any notice of him. The Neapolitan, struck by her appearance, stood still and gazed after her, not heeding that he was standing in the very midst of the game, which, with two steps, he might have cleared. A very ungentle ball came knocking against his shins, as a reminder that this was not the spot to choose for meditation. He looked round, as if in expectation of some excuse. But the young boatman who had thrown the ball stood silent among his friends, in such an attitude of defiance that the stranger had found it more advisable to go his ways and avoid discussion. Still, this little encounter had been spoken of, particularly at the time when the painter had been pressing his suit to Laurella. "I do not even know him," she said indignantly, when the painter asked her whether it was for the sake of that uncourteous lad she now refused him. But she had heard that piece of gossip, and known Antonio well enough when she had met him since.

And now they sat together in this boat, like two most deadly enemies, while their hearts were beating fit to kill them. Antonio's usually so good-humoured face was heated to scarlet; he struck the oars so sharply that the foam flew over to where Laurella sat, while his lips moved as if muttering angry words. She pretended not to notice, wearing her most unconscious look, bending over the edge of the boat, and letting the cool water pass between her fingers. Then she threw off her handkerchief again, and began to smooth her hair, as though she had been alone. Only her eyebrows twitched, and she held up her wet hands in vain attempts to cool her burning cheeks.

Now they were well out in the open sea. The island was far behind, and the coast before them lay yet distant in the hot haze. Not a sail was within sight, far or near—not even a passing gull to break the stillness. Antonio

looked all round, evidently ripening some hasty resolution. The colour faded suddenly from his cheek, and he dropped his oars. Laurella looked round involuntarily—fearless, yet attentive.

"I must make an end of this," the young fellow burst forth. "It has lasted too long already! I only wonder that it has not killed me! You say you do not know me? And all this time you must have seen me pass you like a madman, my whole heart full of what I had to tell you; and then you only made your crossest mouth, and turned your back upon me."

"What had I to say to you?" she curtly replied. "I may have seen that you were inclined to meddle with me, but I do not choose to be on people's wicked tongues for nothing. I do not mean to have you for a husband—neither you nor any other."

"Nor any other? So you will not always say! You say so now, because you would not have that painter. Bah! you were but a child! You will feel lonely enough yet, some day; and then, wild as you are, you will take the next best who comes to hand."

"Who knows? which of us can see the future? It may be that I will change my mind. What is that to you?"

"What is it to me?" he burst out, starting to his feet, while the small boat leaped and danced; "what is it to me, you say? You know well enough! I tell you, that man shall perish miserably to whom you shall prove kinder than you have been to me!"

"And to you, what did I ever promise? Am I to blame if you be mad? What right have you to me?"

"Ah! I know," he cried, "my right is written nowhere. It has not been put in Latin by any lawyer, nor stamped with any seal. But this I feel: I have just the right to you that I have to heaven, if I die an honest Christian. Do you think I could look on and see you go to church with another man, and see the girls go by and shrug their shoulders at me?"

"You can do as you please. I am not going to let myself be frightened by all those threats. I also mean to do as I please."

"You shall not say so long!" and his whole frame shook with passion. "I am not the man to let my whole life be spoiled by a stubborn wench like you! You are in my power here, remember, and may be made to do my bidding."

She could not repress a start, but her eyes flashed bravely on him.

"You may kill me if you dare," she said slowly.

"I do nothing by halves," he said, and his voice sounded choked and hoarse. "There is room for us both in the sea. I cannot help thee, child"—he spoke the last words dreamily, almost pitifully—"but we must both go down together—both at once—and now!" he shouted, and snatched her in his arms. But at the same moment he drew back his right hand; the blood gushed out; she had bitten him fiercely.

"Ha! can I be made to do your bidding?" she cried, and thrust him from her, with one sudden movement; "am I here in your power?" and she leaped into the sea, and sank.

She rose again directly; her scanty skirts clung close; her long hair, loosened by the waves, hung heavy about her neck. She struck out valiantly, and,

without uttering a sound, she began to swim steadily from the boat toward the shore.

With senses benumbed by sudden terror, he stood, with outstretched neck, looking after her, his eyes fixed as though they had just been witness to a miracle. Then, giving himself a shake, he seized his oars, and began rowing after her with all the strength he had, while all the time the bottom of the boat was reddening fast with the blood that kept streaming from his hand.

Rapidly as she swam, he was at her side in a moment. "For the love of our most Holy Virgin," he cried, "get into the boat! I have been a madman! God alone can tell what so suddenly darkened my brain. It came upon me like a flash of lightning, and set me all on fire. I knew not what I did or said. I do not even ask you to forgive me, Laurella, only to come into the boat again, and not to risk your life!"

She swam on as though she had not heard him.

"You can never swim to land. I tell you, it is two miles off. Think of your mother! If you should come to grief, I should die of horror."

She measured the distance with her eye, and then, without answering him one word, she swam up to the boat, and laid her hands upon the edge; he rose to help her in. As the boat tilted over to one side with the girl's weight, his jacket that was lying on the bench slipped into the water. Agile as she was, she swung herself on board without assistance, and gained her former seat. As soon as he saw that she was safe, he took to his oars again, while she began quietly wringing out her dripping clothes, and shaking the water from her hair. As her eyes fell upon the bottom of the boat, and saw the blood, she gave a quick look at the hand, which held the oar as if it had been unhurt.

"Take this," she said, and held out her handkerchief. He shook his head, and went on rowing. After a time she rose, and, stepping up to him, bound the handkerchief firmly round the wound, which was very deep. Then, heedless of his endeavours to prevent her, she took an oar, and, seating herself opposite him, began to row with steady strokes, keeping her eyes from looking toward him—fixed upon the oar that was scarlet with his blood. Both were pale and silent. As they drew near land, such fishermen as they met began shouting after Antonio and gibing at Laurella; but neither of them moved an eyelid, or spoke one word.

The sun stood yet high over Procida when they landed at the marina. Laurella shook out her petticoat, now nearly dry, and jumped on shore. The old spinning woman, who in the morning had seen them start, was still upon her terrace. She called down, "What is that upon your hand, Tonino? The boat is full of blood!"

"It is nothing, comare," the young fellow replied. "I tore my hand against a nail that was sticking out too far; it will be well to-morrow. It is only this confounded ready blood of mine, that always makes a thing look worse than it is."

"Let me come and bind it up, comparello. Stop one moment; I will go and fetch the herbs, and come to you directly."

"Never trouble yourself, comare. It

has been dressed already; to-morrow it will be all over and forgotten. I have a healthy skin, that heals directly."

"Addio!" said Laurella, turning to the path that goes winding up the cliffs. "Good-night!" he answered, without looking at her; and then taking his oars and baskets from the boat, and climbing up the small stone stairs, he went into his own hut.

He was alone in his two little rooms, and began to pace them up and down. Cooler than upon the dead calm sea, the breeze blew fresh through the small unglazed windows, which could only be closed with wooden shutters. The solitude was soothing to him. He stooped before the little image of the Virgin, devoutly gazing upon the glory round the head (made of stars cut out in silver paper). But he did not want to pray. What reason had he to pray, now that he had lost all he ever hoped for?

And this day appeared to last forever. He did so long for night! for he was weary, and more exhausted by the loss of blood than he would have cared to own. His hand was very sore. Seating himself upon a little stool, he untied the handkerchief that bound it; the blood, so long repressed, gushed out again; all round the wound the hand was swollen high.

He washed it carefully, cooling it in the water; then he clearly saw the marks of Laurella's teeth.

"She was right," he said; "I was a brute, and deserved no better. I will send her back the handkerchief by Giuseppe to-morrow. Never shall she set her eyes on me again." And he washed the handkerchief with the greatest care, and spread it out in the sun to dry.

And having bound up his hand again, as well as he could manage with his teeth and his left hand, he threw himself upon his bed, and closed his eyes.

He was soon waked up from a sort of slumber by the rays of the bright moonlight, and also by the pain of his hand; he had just risen for more cold water to soothe its throbbings, when he heard the sound of some one at the door. Laurella stood before him.

She came in without a question, took off the handkerchief she had tied over her head, and placed her little basket upon the table; then she drew a deep breath.

"You are come to fetch your handkerchief," he said. "You need not have taken that trouble. In the morning I would have asked Giuseppe to take it to you."

"It is not the handkerchief," she said quickly. "I have been up among the hills to gather herbs to stop the blood; see here." And she lifted the lid of her little basket.

"Too much trouble," he said, not in bitterness—"far too much trouble. I am better, much better; but if I were worse, it would be no more than I deserve. Why did you come at such a time? If any one should see you? You know how they talk, even when they don't know what they are saying."

"I care for no one's talk," she said passionately. "I came to see your hand, and put the herbs upon it; you cannot do it with your left."

"It is not worth while, I tell you."

"Let me see it then, if I am to believe you."

She took his hand, that was not able

to prevent her, and unbound the linen. When she saw the swelling, she shuddered, and gave a cry: "Jesus Maria!"

"It is a little swollen," he said; "it will be over in four-and-twenty hours."

She shook her head. "It will certainly be a week before you can go to sea."

"More likely a day or two; and if not, what matters?"

She had fetched a basin, and began carefully washing out the wound, which he suffered passively, like a child. She then laid on the healing leaves, which at once relieved the burning pain, and finally bound it up with the linen she had brought with her.

When it was done: "I thank you," he said. "And now, if you would do me one more kindness, forgive the madness that came over me; forget all I said and did. I cannot tell how it came to pass; certainly it was not your fault—not yours. And never shall you hear from me again one word to vex you."

She interrupted him. "It is I who have to beg your pardon. I should have spoken differently. I might have explained it better, and not enraged you with my sullen ways. And now that bite—"

"It was in self-defence; it was high time to bring me to my senses. As I said before, it is nothing at all to signify. Do not talk of being forgiven; you only did me good, and I thank you for it. And now, here is your handkerchief; take it with you."

He held it to her, but yet she lingered, hesitated, and appeared to have some inward struggle. At length she said: "You have lost your jacket, and by my fault; and I know that all the money for the oranges was in it. I did not think of this till afterwards. I cannot replace it now; we have not so much at home—or if we had it would be mother's. But this I have—this silver cross. That painter left it on the table the day he came for the last time. I have never looked at it all this while, and do not care to keep it in my box: you might sell it? It must be worth a few piastres, mother says. It might make up the money you have lost; and if not quite, I could earn the rest by spinning at night when mother is asleep."

"Nothing will make me take it," he said shortly, pushing away the bright new cross, which she had taken from her pocket.

"You must," she said; "how can you tell how long your hand may keep you from your work? There it lies; and nothing can make me so much as look at it again."

"Drop it in the sea, then."

"It is no present I want to make you; it is no more than is your due; it is only fair."

"Nothing from you can be due to me; and hereafter when we chance to meet, if you would do me a kindness, I beg you not to look my way. It would make me feel you were thinking of what I had done. And now good-night; and let this be the last word said."

She laid the handkerchief in the basket, and also the cross, and closed the lid. But when he looked into her face, he started. Great heavy drops were rolling down her cheeks; she let them flow unheeded.

"Maria Santissima!" he cried. "Are you ill? You are trembling from head to foot!"

"It is nothing," she said; "I must go home;" and with unsteady steps she was moving to the door, when suddenly she leaned her brow against the wall, and gave way to a fit of bitter sobbing. Before he could go to her she turned upon him suddenly and fell upon his neck.

"I cannot bear it!" she cried, clinging to him as a dying thing to life—"I cannot bear it! I cannot let you speak so kindly, and bid me go, with all this on my conscience. Beat me! trample on me! curse me! Or if it can be that you love me still, after all I have done to you, take me and keep me, and do with me as you please; only do not send me away so!" She could say no more for sobbing.

Speechless, he held her awhile in his arms. "If I can love you still!" he cried at last. "Holy Mother of God! Do you think that all my best heart's blood has gone from me through that little wound? Don't you hear it hammering now, as though it would burst my breast and go to you? But if you say this to try me, or because you pity me, I can forget it. You are not to think you owe me this, because you know what I have suffered for you."

"No!" she said very resolutely, looking up from his shoulder into his face, with her tearful eyes; "it is because I love you; and let me tell you, it was because I always feared to love you that I was so savage. I will be so different now. I never could bear again to pass you in the street without one look! And lest you should ever feel a doubt, I will kiss you, that you may say, 'She kissed me'; and Laurella kisses no man but her husband."

She kissed him thrice, and, escaping from his arms: "And now good-night, *amor mio, cara vita mia!*" she said. "Lie down to sleep, and let your hand get well. Do not come with me; I am afraid of no man, save of you alone."

And so she slipped out, and soon disappeared in the shadow of the wall.

He remained standing by the window, gazing far out over the calm sea, while all the stars in heaven appeared to flit before his eyes.

The next time the little curato sat in his confessional, he sat smiling to himself. Laurella had just risen from her knees after a very long confession.

"Who would have thought it?" he said musingly—"that the Lord would so soon have taken pity upon that wayward little heart? And I had been reproaching myself for not having adjured more sternly that ill demon of perversity. Our eyes are but short-sighted to see the ways of Heaven! Well, may God bless her, I say, and let me live to go to sea with Laurella's eldest born, rowing me in his father's place! Ah! well, indeed! l'Arrabiata!"

Jack Slade, Bandit

After the execution of five men on the 14th of January, the Vigilantes of Montana considered that their work was nearly ended. They had freed the country of highwaymen and murderers to a great extent, and they determined that in the absence of the regular civil authority they would establish a Peo-

ple's Court where all offenders should be tried by judge and jury. This was the nearest approach to social order that the circumstances permitted, and, though strict legal authority was wanting, yet the people were firmly determined to maintain its efficiency, and to enforce its decrees. The overt act which was the last round on the fatal ladder leading to the scaffold on which Jack Slade perished, was the tearing in pieces and stamping upon a writ of this court, followed by his arrest of the Judge, Alex. Davis, by authority of a presented Derringer, and with his own hands.

J. A. Slade was himself, we have been informed, a Vigilante; he openly boasted of it, and said he knew all that they knew. He was never accused, or even suspected, of either murder of robbery, committed in this Territory (the latter crime was never laid to his charge, in any place); but that he had killed several men in other localities was notorious, and his bad reputation in this respect was a most powerful argument in determining his fate, when he was finally arrested for the offence above mentioned. He became addicted to drinking, until at last it was a common feat for him and his friends to "take the town." He and a couple of his dependents might often be seen on one horse, galloping through the streets, shouting and yelling, firing revolvers, etc. On many occasions he would ride his horse into stores, break up bars, toss the scales out of doors and use most insulting language to parties present. Just previous to the day of his arrest, he had given a fearful beating to one of his followers; but such was his influence over them that the man wept bitterly at the gallows, and begged for his life with all his power. It had become quite common, when Slade was on a spree, for the shopkeepers and citizens to close the stores and put out all the lights; being fearful of some outrage at his hands. For his wanton destruction of goods and furniture, he was always ready to pay, when sober, if he had money; but there were not a few who regarded payment as small satisfaction for the outrage, and these men were his personal enemies.

From time to time Slade received warnings from men that he well knew would not deceive him, of the certain end of his conduct. There was not a moment, for weeks previous to his arrest, in which the public did not expect to hear of some bloody outrage. The dread of his very name, and the presence of the armed band of hangers-on who followed him, alone prevented a resistance which must certainly have ended in the instant murder or mutilation of the opposing party.

Slade was frequently arrested by order of the court whose organization we have described, and had treated it with respect by paying one or two fines and promising to pay the rest when he had money; but in the transaction that occurred at this crisis, he forgot even this caution, and goaded by passion and the hatred of restraint, he sprang into the embrace of death.

Slade had been drunk and "cutting up" all night. He and his companions had made the town a perfect hell. In the morning, J. M. Fox, the sheriff, met him, arrested him, took him into court and commenced reading a warrant that he had for his arrest, by way of arraignment. He became uncontrollably furious, and seizing the writ,

he tore it up, threw it on the ground and stamped upon it. The clicking of the locks of his companions' revolvers was instantly heard, and a crisis was expected. The sheriff did not attempt his retention; but being at least as prudent as he was valiant, he succumbed, leaving Slade the master of the situation and the conqueror and ruler of the courts, law and law-makers. This was a declaration of war, and was so accepted. The Vigilance Committee now felt that the question of social order and the preponderance of the law-abiding citizens had then and there to be decided. They knew the character of Slade, and they were well aware that they must submit to his rule without murmur, or else that he must be dealt with in such fashion as would prevent his being able to wreak his vengeance on the Committee, who could never have hoped to live in the Territory secure from outrage or death, and who could never leave it without encountering his friends, whom his victory would have emboldened and stimulated to a pitch that would have rendered them reckless of consequences. The day previous he had ridden into Dorris's store, and on being requested to leave, he drew his revolver and threatened to kill the gentleman who spoke to him. Another saloon he had led his horse into, and buying a bottle of wine, he tried to make the animal drink it. This was not considered an uncommon performance, as he had often entered saloons and commenced firing at the lamps, causing a wild stampede.

A leading member of the Committee met Slade, and informed him in the quiet, earnest manner of one who feels the importance of what he is saying: "Slade, get your horse at once, and go home, or there will be——to pay." Slade started and took a long look, with his dark and piercing eyes, at the gentleman. "What do you mean?" said he. "You have no right to ask me what I mean," was the quiet reply; "get your horse at once, and remember what I tell you." After a short pause he promised to do so, and actually got into the saddle; but, being still intoxicated, he began calling aloud to one after another of his friends, and at last seemed to have forgotten the warning he had received and became again uproarious, shouting the name of a well-known courtezan in company with those of two men whom he considered heads of the Committee, as a sort of challenge; perhaps, however, as a simple act of bravado. It seems probable that the intimation of personal danger he had received had not been forgotten entirely; though fatally for him, he took a foolish way of showing his remembrance of it. He sought out Alexander Davis, the Judge of the Court, and drawing a cocked Derringer, he presented it at his head, and told him that he should hold him as a hostage for his own safety. As the Judge stood perfectly quiet, and offered no resistance to his captor, no further outrage followed on this score. Previous to this, on account of the critical state of affairs, the Committee had met, and at last resolved to arrest him. His execution had not been agreed upon, and at that time, would have been negatived, most assuredly. A messenger rode down to Nevada to inform the leading men of what was on hand, as it was desirable to show that there was a feeling of

unanimity on the subject all along the gulch.

The miners turned out almost *en masse,* leaving their work and forming in solid column; about six hundred strong, armed to the teeth, they marched up to Virginia. The leader of the body well knew the temper of his men on the subject. He spurred on ahead of them, and hastily calling a meeting of the executive, he told them plainly that the miners meant "business," and that, if they came up, they would not stand in the street to be shot down by Slade's friends; but that they would take him and hang him. The meeting was small, as the Virginia men were loath to act at all. This momentous announcement of the feeling of the Lower Town was made to a cluster of men who were deliberating behind a wagon, at the rear of a store on Main street.

The Committee were most unwilling to proceed to extremities. All the duty they had ever performed seemed as nothing to the task before them; but they had to decide, and that quickly. It was finally agreed that if the whole body of the miners were of the opinion that he should be hanged, the Committee left it in their hands to deal with him. Off, at hot speed, rode the leader of the Nevada men to join his command.

Slade had found out what was intended, and the news sobered him instantly. He went into P. S. Pfout's store, where Davis was, and apologized for his conduct, saying that he would take it all back.

The head of the column now wheeled into Wallace street and marched up at quick time. Halting in front of the store, the executive officer of the Committee stepped forward and arrested Slade, who was at once informed of his doom, and enquiry was made as to whether he had any business to settle. Several parties spoke to him on the subject; but to all such enquiries he turned a deaf ear, being entirely absorbed in the terrifying reflection on his own awful position. He never ceased his entreaties for life, and to see his dear wife. The unfortunate lady referred to, between whom and Slade there existed a warm affection, was at this time living at their ranch on the Madison. She was possessed of considerable personal attractions; tall, well-formed, of graceful carriage, pleasing manners, and was, withal, an accomplished horsewoman.

A messenger from Slade rode at full speed to inform her of her husband's arrest. In an instant she was in the saddle, and with all the energy that love and despair could lend to an ardent temperament and a strong physique, she urged her fleet charger over the twelve miles of rough and rocky ground that intervened between her and the object of her passionate devotion.

Meanwhile a party of volunteers had made the necessary preparations for the execution, in the valley traversed by the branch. Beneath the site of Pfout's and Russell's stone building there was a corral, the gate-posts of which were strong and high. Across the top was laid a beam, to which the rope was fastened, and a dry-goods box served for the platform. To this place Slade was marched, surrounded by a guard, composing the best armed and most numerous force that has ever appeared in Montana Territory.

The doomed man had so exhausted himself by tears, prayers and lamenta-

tions, that he had scarcely strength left to stand under the fatal beam. He repeatedly exclaimed, "My God! my God! must I die? Oh, my dear wife!"

On the return of the fatigue party, they encountered some friends of Slade, staunch and reliable citizens and members of the Committee, but who were personally attached to the condemned. On hearing of his sentence, one of them, a stout-hearted man, pulled out his handkerchief and walked away, weeping like a child. Slade still begged to see his wife, most piteously, and it seemed hard to deny his request; but the bloody consequences that were sure to follow the inevitable attempt at a rescue, that her presence and entreaties would have certainly incited, forbade the granting of his request. Several gentlemen were sent for to see him, in his last moments, one of whom (Judge Davis) made a short address to the people; but in such low tones as to be inaudible, save to a few in his immediate vicinity. One of his friends, after exhausting his powers of entreaty, threw off his coat and declared that the prisoner could not be hanged until he himself was killed. A hundred guns were instantly leveled at him; whereupon he turned and fled; but, being brought back, he was compelled to resume his coat, and to give a promise of future peaceable demeanor.

Scarcely a leading man in Virginia could be found, though numbers of the citizens joined the ranks of the guard when the arrest was made. All lamented the stern necessity which dictated the execution.

Everything being ready, the command was given, "Men, do your duty," and the box being instantly slipped from beneath his feet, he died almost instantaneously.

The body was cut down and carried to the Virginia Hotel, where, in a darkened room, it was scarcely laid out, when the unfortunate and bereaved companion of the deceased arrived, at headlong speed, to find that all was over, and that she was a widow. Her grief and heart-piercing cries were terrible evidences of the depth of her attachment for her lost husband, and a considerable period elapsed before she ever regained the command of her broken soul.

A Coward?

It was nearing eleven o'clock and we were sitting in the *café* of the Globe in Vera Cruz, a little group of officials and garrison officers who met there daily to pass away the time.

"My friends," said Colonel Naredo, "you probably believe there are only the two extremes—either a man is a coward, or he is a hero, and that the coward is always a coward and the hero always brave."

"So it is," replied the naval officer.

"But it is not so," emphasized Naredo. "Courage is a very complex quality, and very difficult to define. There are many kinds of courage, and courage varies according to times and circumstances. I shall relate you a case in point and you can draw your own conclusions.

"It was in the year of grace 1860, and I was serving as lieutenant in the

battalion of national guards in town, our colonel being Don Manuel Gutierrez Zamora. It was the month of March, and the *Maccabee*, as we called Miramon, was besieging our stronghold, pouring into it a perfect hail of bombs and grenades.

"One night when we feared that the enemy was going to make an attempt to storm the works under cover of the darkness, I was ordered to select four men to do advance sentry duty. I chose those who appeared best fitted for the task, four handsome young fellows, artisans in peace and soldiers for the nonce. I assigned his post to each one and gave him his instructions.

" 'You, Corporal Felipe Luna,' I said to one of them, a veritable athlete, 'will take your station in the cemetery.'

"The men saluted and all filed off with the exception of Luna.

" 'What are you waiting for?' I asked him.

" 'Lieutenant,' he responded, 'with your permission, I shall not undertake this service.'

"Although I was only a raw national guardsman, I felt thoroughly indignant at this breach of discipline. Nevertheless, not wishing to act hastily, and to give the man a chance to right himself, I said:

" 'What is that you are saying to me?'

" 'That I beg you, lieutenant, to relieve me from this service.'

" 'You will instantly obey the order given you,' I exclaimed angrily.

" 'Lieutenant, I humbly and respectfully beg you to excuse me,' insisted Luna.

" 'If you fail to obey, you will be shot.'

" 'Let them shoot me then, lieutenant."

"The whole company witnessed this act of insubordination and disobedience in the face of the enemy. My military prestige, the whole fabric of military discipline was in jeopardy. Still, I controlled myself sufficiently to say to Luna, 'Why do you refuse to obey?'

" 'Because I am afraid, lieutenant.'

" 'What!' I cried in astonishment. 'A big fellow like you, a corporal in the company of grenadiers, dares to confess before his comrades that he is a coward!'

" 'Excuse me, lieutenant, I didn't say I was a coward; I said that I am afraid.'

" 'That is the same thing,' I retorted.

" 'Excuse me, lieutenant, but it is a very different thing. A coward is one who is always afraid and can never control his fear. I am only afraid at nights and of ghosts. Now it is night and you order me to do sentry duty in a cemetery, and I would rather have a bullet put into me than die of terror, since the first is the easier death.'

"I was about to resort to extreme measures, when the sentry cried out:

" 'Salute the commander, Colonel Zamora.'

"The soldiers ran to take their muskets and fell into line. Colonel Zamora appeared, accompanied by his staff, and, greeting us in his usual friendly way, said:

" 'Good evening, boys. Is there any news?'

"I told him that Corporal Luna had just refused to obey orders.

" 'Well! Well!' exclaimed Zamora, smiling and shaking his head. 'Let me see. Where is this Corporal Luna?'

"'Present, colonel,' replied the man, stepping forward.

"'So, so, my son, you are the culprit. Come nearer. Now, what is the matter?'

"'Colonel,' answered Luna, 'the matter is that they have chosen me to do sentry duty at night in a cemetery, and I have respectfully begged to be relieved of this duty because I am afraid of ghosts.'

"'You do well to confess it, my son, and I admire the true bravery you have shown,' was the colonel's unexpected reply.

"On hearing these words, we were all staggered. The colonel noted this and saw that he must explain his meaning.

"'Yes, my boys,' he said, 'courage is needed, great courage, to speak as Luna has just spoken, and we owe him thanks for so doing. Only suppose that he had not been brave enough and loyal enough to confess his fear. He would then have feigned to accept the charge, would have gone outside the fortress, and, instead of making his way to the proper point, would merely have gone a few steps beyond the wall and then hidden himself in some place where he would have been quite safe from discovery. In the meanwhile, we, trusting to his vigilance, would have been at the mercy of a surprise. You are excused, my son. If you cannot serve us at nighttime in a cemetery, you will do good service in some other place and at some other time. Let any one of the company who is willing to volunteer for the service in the cemetery step out of the ranks.'

"The whole company of grenadiers advanced as one man.

"'You may go, Juan González,' said Zamora, who knew every one of the battalion by name, 'you may go, and good luck go with you. The only order I give you is, Don't get tipsy.'

"'I swear to you, colonel, that I shall not taste even one little drop,' responded González, as he departed.

"To speak plainly, neither I nor anyone else in the company had been convinced by the colonel's justification of Luna's conduct, and we all guyed the latter unmercifully on his cowardice as he went off.

"On the following day my company was detailed to serve in one of the advanced redouts called *La Gola.* This was one of the days on which the *Maccabee* pounded us unceasingly, but we had become so used to the bombs and grenades that we paid little attention to them.

"The grenadiers were quietly eating their ration while the gunners were firing off the eight-pounders regularly and with such accurate aim that Miramon is said to have believed the furies were served by Americans. But what need had we of Americans? Our gunners were all 'made in Vera Cruz.'

"Suddenly a bomb plunged right down into our midst, partly embedding itself in the leveled ground; the outwork was constructed of earth and sand-bags. The boys all threw themselves down on their faces. The projectile whirled around in the hole it had dug out, hissing and sputtering as though it were some live and malevolent thing.

"I remained standing, not through bravado, but because I felt as though rooted to the spot, for I noted some powder barrels near us which the gun

ners had been using. I grasped the imminent danger we were in of being blown to atoms, and *I was overcome by fear.*

"Yes, I was afraid, horribly afraid, in the daytime, in a fortified enclosure where there were no dead men but many living ones. I experienced one of those nightmare terrors that paralyze us, deadening even the instinct of self-preservation so that we cannot even fly from the danger.

"It is true this only lasted a moment, the time of a lightning flash.

"All at once I saw a man of athletic build spring up, approach the bomb, seize it, carry it in his hands to the parapet, and drop it outside into the ditch.

"We heard a frightful explosion. There was a moment of silence and amazement. The first shock over, we touched ourselves to make sure that we were still alive and unhurt. Then our eyes turned to the man who had so heroically saved us. We saw him sitting on a gun-carriage quietly eating his ration, as though nothing out of the common had happened.

"That man, gentlemen, was Corporal Felipe Luna, the soldier who was afraid of ghosts.

"So you see courage is a very queer thing."

First Gorilla

One day, during my African explorations, when a snake had been eaten, and I, the only empty-stomached individual of the company, had sufficiently reflected on the disadvantages of being bred in a civilized country, we began to look about the ruins of the village near which we sat. A degenerate kind of sugar-cane was growing on the very spot where the houses had formerly stood, and I made haste to pluck some of this and chew it for the little sweetness it had. But, as we were plucking, my men perceived what instantly threw us all into the greatest excitement. Here and there the cane was beaten down, torn up by the roots, and lying about in fragments which had evidently been chewed.

I knew that these were tracks of the gorilla, and joy filled my heart. My men looked at each other in silence, and muttered *Nguyla,* which is as much as to say in Mpongwe, *Ngina,* or, as we say, gorilla.

We followed these traces, and presently came to the footprints of the so-long-desired animal. It was the first time I had ever seen these footprints, and my sensations were indescribable. Here was I now, it seemed, on the point of meeting face to face that monster of whose ferocity, strength and cunning the natives had told me so much; an animal scarce known to the civilized world, and which no white man before had hunted. My heart beat till I feared its loud pulsations, and my feelings were really excited to a painful degree.

By the tracks it was easy to know that there must have been several gorillas in company. We prepared at once to follow them. . . .

We could easily see that there were four or five of them; though none ap-

peared very large. We saw where they had run along on all fours, the usual mode of progression of these animals; and where, from time to time, they had seated themselves to chew the canes they had borne off. The chase began to be very exciting.

We had agreed to return to the women and their guards, and consult upon final operations when we should have discovered their probable cause; and this was now done. To make sure of not alarming our prey, we moved the whole party forward a little way to where some leafy huts, built by passing traders, served for shelter and concealment. And having here stowed the women . . . we prepared once more to set out in chase, this time hopeful to get a shot.

Looking once more to our guns, we started off. I confess that I had never been more excited in my life. I had heard of the terrible roar of the gorilla, of its vast strength, its fierce courage, if, unhappily, only wounded by a shot. I knew that we were about to pit ourselves against an animal which even the leopard of these mountains fears. . . .

Slowly we pressed on through the dense brush, fearing almost to breathe lest we should alarm the beasts. Makinda was to go to the right of the rock, while I took the left. Unfortunately, he circled it at too great a distance. The watchful animals saw him. Suddenly I was startled by a strange, discordant, half-human, devilish cry, and beheld four young gorillas running towards the deep forests. We fired, but hit nothing. Then we rushed on in pursuit; but they knew the woods better than we. Once I caught a glimpse of one of the animals again. but an intervening tree spoiled my aim, and I did not fire. We ran till we were exhausted, but in vain. The alert beasts made good their escape. When we could pursue no more we returned slowly to our camp, where the women were anxiously expecting us.

As I saw the gorillas running—on their hind legs—they looked fearfully like hairy men; their heads down, their bodies inclined forward, their whole appearance was like men running for their lives. Take with this their awful cry, which, fierce and animal as it is, has yet something human in its discordance, and you will cease to wonder that the natives have the wildest superstitions about these "wild men of the woods." . . .

We started early, and pushed for the most dense and impenetrable part of the forest, in hopes to find the very home of the beast I so much wished to shoot. Hour after hour we travelled, and yet no sign of gorilla. Only the everlasting little chattering monkeys—and not many of these—and occasionally birds. In fact, the forests of this part of Africa are not so full of life as in some other parts to the south.

Suddenly Miengai uttered a little *cluck* with his tongue, which is the native's way of showing that something is stirring, and that a sharp look-out is necessary. And presently I noticed, ahead of us seemingly, a noise of some one breaking down branches or twigs of trees.

This was the gorilla, I knew at once, by the eager and satisfied looks of the men. They looked once more carefully at their guns, to see if by any chance the powder had fallen out of the pans; I also examined mine, to make sure that

all was right; and then we marched on cautiously.

The singular noise of the breaking of tree-branches continued. We walked with the greatest care, making no noise at all. The countenances of the men showed that they thought themselves engaged in a very serious undertaking; but we pushed on, until finally we thought we saw through the thick woods the moving of the branches and small trees which the great beast was tearing down, probably to get from them the berries and fruits he lives on.

Suddenly, as we were creeping along, in a silence which made a heavy breath seem loud and distinct, the woods were filled with the tremendous barking roar of the gorilla.

Then the underbrush swayed rapidly just ahead, and presently before us stood an immense male gorilla. He had gone through the jungle on all-fours; but when he saw our party, he raised himself erect and looked us boldly in the face. He stood about a dozen yards from us, and was a sight I think I shall never forget. Nearly six feet high (he proved four inches shorter), with immense body, huge chest, and great muscular arms, with fiercely glaring deep gray eyes, and a hellish expression of face, which seemed to me like some nightmare vision; thus stood before us this king of the African forest.

He was not afraid of us. He stood there, and beat his breast with his huge fists till it resounded like an immense bass-drum, which is their mode of offering defiance; meantime giving vent to roar after roar.

The roar of the gorilla is the most singular and awful noise heard in these African woods. It begins with a sharp *bark,* like an angry dog, then glides into a deep bass *roll* which literally and closely resembles the roll of distant thunder along the sky, for which I have sometimes been tempted to take it where I did not see the animal. So deep is it that it seems to proceed less from the mouth and throat than from the deep chest and vast paunch.

His eyes began to flash fiercer fire as we stood motionless on the defensive, and the crest of short hair which stands on his forehead began to twitch rapidly up and down, while his powerful fangs were shown as he again sent forth a thunderous roar. And now truly he reminded me of nothing but some hellish dream-creature—a being of that hideous order, half-man, half-beast, which we find pictured by old artists in some representation of the infernal regions. He advanced a few steps—then stopped to utter that hideous roar again—advanced again, and finally stopped when at a distance of about six yards from us. And here, just as he began another of his roars, beating his breast in rage, we fired and killed him.

With a groan which had something terribly human in it, and yet was full of brutishness, he fell forward on his face. The body shook convulsively for a few minutes, the limbs moved about in a struggling way, and then all was quiet—death had done its work.

The Arch-Rogue

THERE once lived, years ago, a man known only by the name of the ARCH-ROGUE. By dint of skill in the black art and all arts of imposition he drove a more flourishing trade than all the rest of the sorcerers of his age. It was his delight to travel from one country to another merely to play upon mankind, and no living soul was secure, either in house or field, nor could properly call them his own.

Now, his great reputation for these speedy methods of possessing himself of others' property excited the envy of a certain king of a certain country, who considered them as no less than an invasion of his royal prerogative. He could not sleep a wink, and he dispatched troops of soldiers, one after another, with strict orders to arrest him; but all their researches had been in vain. At length after long meditation the king said to himself, "Only wait a little, thou villain cutpurse, and yet I will have thee!" So forthwith he issued a manifesto that the royal mercy would be extended to so light-fingered a genius, upon condition that he consented to appear at court, and give specimens of his dexterity for his majesty's amusement.

One afternoon as the king was standing at his royal window, commanding a fine prospect of woods and dales, over which a tempest appeared to be just then gathering, some one suddenly clapped him upon the shoulder, and on looking round he saw a very tall, stout, dark-whiskered man close behind him, who said, "Here I am!" "Who are you?" inquired the king. "He whom you look for!" The king uttered an exclamation of surprise, not unmixed with fear, at his amazing assurance, for he was quite alone, and he looked a little dashed. The stranger observing this, said, "Don't be alarmed! only keep your word with me, and I will prove myself quite obedient to your orders, and keep the peace."

This being agreed, the king acquainted his royal consort and the whole court that the great sleight of hand genius had discovered himself; and soon in a full assembly his majesty proceeded to question him. "And mark what I say," he added, "nor venture to dispute one of my orders. To begin: do you see yon rustic not far from the wood, busy ploughing the field?" The conjuror nodded assent. "Then go," continued the king, "go and rob him of his plough and oxen, without his knowing anything about it." At the same time he flattered himself that this was not possible, nor conceived how he could possibly set about it in the face of open day; in which case, thought he, I have him in my power, and will make him smart for it.

The conjuror proceeded to the spot; and as the storm appeared to increase, the rain beginning to pour down in torrents, the countryman, letting his oxen rest, ran under a tree for shelter until the rain should have ceased. Just then he heard a jolly singing in the wood; such a glorious song he had never before heard in his life. In fact, he felt wonderfully enlivened; and as the weather continued to look quite dull and sulky, he said to himself, "Well, where's the harm if I take a glass?

Yes, I must see what sport is stirring there." And away he slipped into the wood, still farther and farther, in search of the jovial songster, until he followed his nose so long that he could neither see nor hear anything of it at all.

In the meanwhile the conjuror, that wicked songster in the wood, was not idle. He changed places with the rustic, taking care of the oxen while their master went singing through the wood; and darting out of the thicket, in a few moments he had slashed off the oxen's ears and tails, and stuck them, half hidden, in the ploughman's last furrow. He then drove off the beasts pretty sharply towards the palace. In a short time the rustic found his way out of the wood; looks towards the spot for his oxen, and can see nothing. Then searching on all sides in the utmost anxiety, he finally comes to examine his last furrow, and beholds—oh, horror!—the ears and tails of his poor beasts stretched upon the ground! Imagining that the thunderbolt must have struck and the earth swallowed them up, he poured forth a most dismal lamentation over his lot, roaring aloud till the woods echoed to the sound. When he was tired he bethought himself of running home to find a pick and a spade to dig his unlucky oxen out of the earth again as quickly as possible.

As he went he was met by the king and the conjuror, who inquired the occasion of his piteous lamentations. "My oxen, my poor oxen!" cried the boor, and then related all that had happened to him, entreating them to go with him to the place to witness the disaster. The conjuror then said, "Why don't you try whether you can pull the oxen out again by the horns or by the tail?" With this the rustic, running back, seized one of the tails, and pulling with all his might, it gave way and he fell upon his back. "Thou hast pulled thy beast's tail off," said the conjuror: "try if thou canst succeed better with his horns; if not, thou must even dig for them." Again he pitched himself down in the attempt, while the king laughed very heartily at the sight. But as the worthy man now appeared excessively troubled at his misfortunes, the king promised him another pair of oxen, and the rustic was content.

"You have made good your boast," said the king to the conjuror, as they returned to the palace; "but now you will have to deal with a more difficult job, so muster your wit and courage. To-night you must steal my favourite charger out of his stable, and let nobody know who it is." So, thought the king, I have trapped him at last, for he will never be able to outwit my master of the horse, and all my grooms to boot. To make the matter sure, the king ordered a strong guard under one of his most careful officers to be placed round the stable court. They were armed with stout battleaxes, and were enjoined every half-hour to give the word, and pace alternately through the court. In the royal stables others had the like duty to perform, while the master of the horse himself was to ride the favourite steed the whole time, having been presented by the king with a gold snuff-box, from which he was to take ample pinches in order to keep himself awake, and to give signal by a loud sneeze that he was awake. He was also armed with a heavy sword, with which he was to knock the thief upon the head when he approached.

The rogue first arrayed himself in the master of the bedchamber's clothes, without his leave. About midnight he proceeded to join the guards, furnished with different kinds of rich wine; saying that the king had sent him to thank them for their cheerful compliance with his orders, that the impostor was already secured, and that his master now permitted them to take a glass, and not to give the word quite so loudly, as her majesty had not been able to close her eyes. He then marched into the stables, where he found the master of the horse still astride of the royal charger, busily taking snuff and sneezing every now and then. The master of the bedchamber poured him out a sparkling glass, to drink to his majesty's health, who had sent it; and it looked quite too excellent to resist. Both master and guards then began to jest over the Arch-Rogue's fate, taking, like good subjects, repeated draughts—all to his majesty's health. They soon began to experience the soporific effects: they gaped and stretched, sank gradually upon the ground, and fell asleep. The master, by dint of fresh pinches, however, was the last to yield; but he too now blinked, stopped the horse, which he had kept upon a good walk, and said, "I am so confoundedly sleepy, I can hold it no longer: take you care of the charger for a moment, bind him fast to his stall, and just keep watch." Having uttered these words, he fell like a heavy sack of corn upon the floor, and snored aloud. The mighty conjuror took his place upon the horse, gave him whip and spur, and away he galloped through the slumbering guards, through the court gates, and whistled as he went.

Early in the morning the king, eager to learn the result, hastened to his royal mews, and was a little surprised to find the whole of his guards fast asleep upon the ground; but he saw nothing of his charger. "What is to do here?" he cried in a loud voice; "get up! rouse, you idle varlets!" At last one of them opening his eyes, cried out, "The king! the king!" "Ay, true enough, I am here," replied his majesty, "but my favourite horse is gone. Speak! answer on the instant!" While the affrighted wretches, calling one to another, rubbed their heavy eyes, the king was examining the stalls once more, and stumbling over his master of the horse, turned and gave him some pretty hearty cuffs about the ears. But he only turned upon the other side and grumbled a little: "Let me alone, you rascal! my royal master's horse is not for you." "Rascal!" then exclaimed the insulted king, "do you know who it is?" and he was just about to call his attendants, when he heard hasty footsteps, and the conjuror stood before him. He was laughing very heartily, and said, "My liege, I have just returned from an airing on your noble horse; he is indeed a fine animal, but once or so I was obliged to give him the switch."

The king felt excessively vexed at the rogue's success; yet he was the more resolved to hit upon something that should bring his fox's skin into jeopardy at last. So he thought, and the next day addressed him thus: "Thy third trial is now about to take place, and if you are clever enough to carry it through, you shall not only have your life and liberty, but a handsome allowance to boot. In the other case you know your fate. Now listen! This very night I command you to rob my queen consort of her bridal

ring, to steal it from her finger, and let no one know the thief or the way of thieving." Thought the king to himself, "Now at least I have caught him; for this is not possible, for how can he devise any means? Well, we shall see."

When night approached, his majesty caused all the doors in the palace to be fast closed, and a guard to be set at each. He himself, instead of retiring to rest, took his station, well armed, close to the queen's couch upon an easy chair.

It was a moonlight night; and about two in the morning the king plainly heard a ladder reared up against the window, and the soft step of a man mounting it, and just as he had reached the top and looked in, the king said, "Let fall!" and the next moment the outside shutter gave way, and something fell with a terrible crash to the ground. "Wit!" exclaimed the king, and ran down into the court, telling his consort he was going to see whether the conjuror had died of the fall! No, he was not dead, but quite as whole and brisk as ever; for he had only dropped a dead body which he had stolen from the gallows into the court below. The moment he heard the king's steps upon the staircase, he replaced the ladder, mounted, and going into the chamber, said in the king's voice, "Yes, he is stone dead, so you may now go quietly to sleep, only hand me here your marriage ring, it is too costly and precious to trust it, while you are asleep, in bed." The queen, here imagining it was her royal consort, instantly gave her diamond ring without the least suspicion, and in a moment the conjuror was off through the window with it on his finger. Directly after the king came back. "At last," he said, "I have indeed carried the joke too far. I have repaid him; he is lying there as dead as a door nail; he will plague us no more!" "I know that already; you have told me exactly the same thing twice over, though I think it a little hard that you should have required me to give up my ring." "How came you to know anything of that?" inquired his majesty. "How? from yourself, to be sure," replied his consort: "you informed me the conjuror was dead, and then you asked me for my marriage ring." "I ask for the ring!" exclaimed the king, "then I suppose you must have given it to him!" continued his majesty in a tone of great indignation; "and is it even so at last? By all the saints! this is one of the most confounded unmanageable rascals in existence; I never knew anything equal to it;" and he then informed the queen of the whole affair, though before he arrived at the conclusion of his narration she was fast asleep.

Soon after it was light in the morning, the wily conjuror made his appearance; he bowed to the earth three times before the queen, and presented her with the treasure he had purloined. The king, though excessively chagrined, could not refrain laughing at this sight, adding, "Now hear thou, king of arch-rogues: I only caught a sight of you through my fingers as you were coming, or you would never have come off so well. As it is, however, let all old grudges be forgiven and forgotten. Only take up your residence for a time at my court, taking care at the same time that you do not carry your jokes too far; in which case I might find myself compelled, if nothing worse, to withdraw my favour from you."

The Outcasts of Poker Flat

As Mr. John Oakhurst, gambler, stepped into the main street of Poker Flat on the morning of the twenty-third of November, 1850, he was conscious of a change in its moral atmosphere since the preceding night. Two or three men, conversing earnestly together, ceased as he approached, and exchanged significant glances. There was a Sabbath lull in the air, which, in a settlement unused to Sabbath influences, looked ominous.

Mr. Oakhurst's calm, handsome face betrayed small concern in these indications. Whether he was conscious of any predisposing cause, was another question. "I reckon they're after somebody," he reflected; "likely it's me." He returned to his pocket the handkerchief with which he had been whipping away the red dust of Poker Flat from his neat boots, and quietly discharged his mind of any further conjecture.

In point of fact, Poker Flat was "after somebody." It had lately suffered the loss of several thousand dollars, two valuable horses, and a prominent citizen. It was experiencing a spasm of virtuous reaction, quite as lawless and ungovernable as any of the acts that had provoked it. A secret committee had determined to rid the town of all improper persons. This was done permanently in regard of two men who were then hanging from the boughs of a sycamore in the gulch, and temporarily in the banishment of certain other objectionable characters. I regret to say that some of these were ladies. It is but due to the sex, however, to state that their impropriety was professional, and it was only in such easily established standards of evil that Poker Flat ventured to sit in judgment.

Mr. Oakhurst was right in supposing that he was included in this category. A few of the committee had urged hanging him as a possible example, and a sure method of reimbursing themselves from his pockets of the sums he had won from them. "It's agin justice," said Jim Wheeler, "to let this yer young man from Roaring Camp—an entire stranger—carry away our money." But a crude sentiment of equity residing in the breasts of those who had been fortunate enough to win from Mr. Oakhurst overruled this narrower local prejudice.

Mr. Oakhurst received his sentence with philosophic calmness, none the less coolly that he was aware of the hesitation of his judges. He was too much of a gambler not to accept Fate. With him life was at best an uncertain game, and he recognised the usual percentage in favour of the dealer.

A party of armed men accompanied the deported wickedness of Poker Flat to the outskirts of the settlement. Besides Mr. Oakhurst, who was known to be a coolly desperate man, and for whose intimidation the armed escort was intended, the expatriated party consisted of a young woman familiarly known as "The Duchess"; another, who had bore the title of "Mother Shipton"; and "Uncle Billy," a suspected sluice-robber and confirmed drunkard. The cavalcade provoked no comments from the spectators, nor was

any word uttered by the escort. Only when the gulch which marked the uttermost limit of Poker Flat was reached, the leader spoke briefly and to the point. The exiles were forbidden to return at the peril of their lives.

As the escort disappeared, their pent-up feelings found vent in a few hysterical tears from the Duchess, some bad language from Mother Shipton, and a Parthian volley of expletives from Uncle Billy. The philosophic Oakhurst alone remained silent. He listened calmly to Mother Shipton's desire to cut somebody's heart out, to the repeated statements of the Duchess that she would die in the road, and to the alarming oaths that seemed to be bumped out of Uncle Billy as he rode forward. With the easy good-humour characteristic of his class, he insisted upon exchanging his own riding-horse, "Five Spot," for the sorry mule which the Duchess rode. But even this act did not draw the party into any closer sympathy. The young woman readjusted her somewhat draggled plumes with a feeble, faded coquetry; Mother Shipton eyed the possessor of "Five Spot" with malevolence; and Uncle Billy included the whole party in one sweeping anathema.

The road to Sandy Bar—a camp that, not having as yet experienced the regenerating influences of Poker Flat, consequently seemed to offer some invitation to the emigrants—lay over a steep mountain range. It was distant a day's severe travel. In that advanced season, the party soon passed out of the moist, temperate regions of the foot-hills into the dry, cold, bracing air of the Sierras. The trail was narrow and difficult. At noon the Duchess, rolling out of her saddle upon the ground, declared her intention of going no farther, and the party halted.

The spot was singularly wild and impressive. A wooded amphitheatre, surrounded on three sides by precipitous cliffs of naked granite, sloped gently towards the crest of another precipice that overlooked the valley. It was, undoubtedly, the most suitable spot for a camp, had camping been advisable. But Mr. Oakhurst knew that scarcely half the journey to Sandy Bar was accomplished, and the party were not equipped or provisioned for delay. This fact he pointed out to his companions curtly, with a philosophic commentary on the folly of "throwing up their hand before the game was played out." But they were furnished with liquor, which in this emergency stood them in place of food, fuel, rest, and prescience. In spite of his remonstrances, it was not long before they were more or less under its influence. Uncle Billy passed rapidly from a bellicose state into one of stupor, the Duchess became maudlin, and Mother Shipton snored. Mr. Oakhurst alone remained erect, leaning against a rock, calmly surveying them.

Mr. Oakhurst did not drink. It interfered with a profession which required coolness, impassiveness, and presence of mind, and, in his own language, he "couldn't afford it." As he gazed at his recumbent fellow-exiles, the loneliness begotten of his pariah-trade, his habits of life, his very vices, for the first time seriously oppressed him. He bestirred himself in dusting his black clothes, washing his hands and face, and other acts characteristic of his studiously neat habits, and for a moment forgot his annoyance. The

thought of deserting his weaker and more pitiable companions never perhaps occurred to him. Yet he could not help feeling the want of that excitement which, singularly enough, was most conducive to that calm equanimity for which he was notorious. He looked at the gloomy walls that rose a thousand feet sheer above the circling pines around him; at the sky, ominously clouded; at the valley below, already deepening into shadow. And, doing so, suddenly he heard his own name called.

A horseman slowly ascended the trail. In the fresh, open face of the newcomer, Mr. Oakhurst recognized Tom Simson, otherwise known as "The Innocent" of Sandy Bar. He had met him some months before over a "little game," and had, with perfect equanimity, won the entire fortune—amounting to some forty dollars—of that guileless youth. After the game was finished, Mr. Oakhurst drew the youthful speculator behind the door, and thus addressed him: "Tommy, you're a good little man, but you can't gamble worth a cent. Don't try it over again." He then handed him his money back, pushed him gently from the room, and so made a devoted slave of Tom Simson.

There was a remembrance of this in his boyish and enthusiastic greeting of Mr. Oakhurst. He had started, he said, to go to Poker Flat to seek his fortune. "Alone?" No, not exactly alone; in fact (a giggle), he had run away with Piney Woods. Didn't Mr. Oakhurst remember Piney? She that used to wait on the table at the Temperance House? They had been engaged a long time, but old Jake Woods had objected, and so they had run away, and were going to Poker Flat to be married; and here they were. And they were tired out, and how lucky it was they had found a place to camp and company. All this the Innocent delivered rapidly, while Piney, a stout, comely damsel of fifteen, emerged from behind the pine-tree, where she had been blushing unseen, and rode to the side of her lover.

Mr. Oakhurst seldom troubled himself with sentiment, still less with propriety; but he had a vague idea that the situation was not fortunate. He retained, however, his presence of mind sufficiently to kick Uncle Billy, who was about to say something, and Uncle Billy was sober enough to recognize in Mr. Oakhurst's kick a superior power that would not bear trifling. He then endeavoured to dissuade Tom Simson from delaying further, but in vain. He even pointed out the fact that there was no provision, nor means of making a camp. But, unluckily, the Innocent met this objection by assuring the party that he was provided with an extra mule loaded with provisions, and by the discovery of a rude attempt at a log-house near the trail. "Piney can stay with Mrs. Oakhurst," said the Innocent, pointing to the Duchess, "and I can shift for myself."

Nothing but Mr. Oakhurst's admonishing foot saved Uncle Billy from bursting into a roar of laughter. As it was, he felt compelled to retire up the cañon until he could recover his gravity. There he confided the joke to the tall pinetrees, with many slaps of his leg, contortions of his face, and the usual profanity. But when he returned to the party, he found them seated by a fire—for the air had grown strangely chill,

and the sky overcast—in apparently amicable conversation. Piney was actually talking in an impulsive, girlish fashion to the Duchess, who was listening with an interest and animation she had not shown for many days. The Innocent was holding forth, apparently with equal effect, to Mr. Oakhurst and Mother Shipton, who was actually relaxing into amiability. "Is this yer a d—d pic-nic?" said Uncle Billy, with inward scorn, as he surveyed the sylvan group, the glancing firelight, and the tethered animals in the foreground. Suddenly an idea mingled with the alcoholic fumes that disturbed his brain. It was apparently of a jocular nature, for he felt impelled to slap his leg again and cram his fist into his mouth.

As the shadows crept slowly up the mountain, a slight breeze rocked the tops of the pine-trees, and moaned through their long and gloomy aisles. The ruined cabin, patched and covered with pine-boughs, was set apart for the ladies. As the lovers parted, they unaffectedly exchanged a kiss, so honest and sincere that it might have been heard above the swaying pines. The frail Duchess and the malevolent Mother Shipton were probably too stunned to remark upon this last evidence of simplicity, and so turned without a word to the hut. The fire was replenished, the men lay down before the door, and in a few minutes were asleep.

Mr. Oakhurst was a light sleeper. Toward morning he awoke benumbed and cold. As he stirred the dying fire, the wind, which was now blowing strongly, brought to his cheek that which caused the blood to leave it,—snow!

He started to his feet with the intention of awakening the sleepers, for there was no time to lose. But turning to where Uncle Billy had been lying, he found him gone. A suspicion leaped to his brain and a curse to his lips. He ran to the spot where the mules had been tethered; they were no longer there. The tracks were already rapidly disappearing in the snow.

The momentary excitement brought Mr. Oakhurst back to the fire with his usual calm. He did not waken the sleepers. The Innocent slumbered peacefully, with a smile on his good-humoured, freckled face; the virgin Piney slept beside her frailer sisters as sweetly as though attended by celestial guardians, and Mr. Oakhurst, drawing his blanket over his shoulders, stroked his mustaches and waited for the dawn. It came slowly in a whirling mist of snow-flakes, that dazzled and confused the eye. What could be seen of the landscape appeared magically changed. He looked over the valley, and summed up the present and future in two words —"snowed in!"

A careful inventory of the provisions, which, fortunately for the party, had been stored within the hut, and so escaped the felonious fingers of Uncle Billy, disclosed the fact that with care and prudence they might last ten days longer. "That is," said Mr. Oakhurst, *sotto voce* to the Innocent, "if you're willing to board us. If you ain't—and perhaps you'd better not—you can wait till Uncle Billy gets back with provisions." For some occult reason Mr. Oakhurst could not bring himself to disclose Uncle Billy's rascality, and so offered the hypothesis that he had wandered from the camp and had accident-

ally stampeded the animals. He dropped a warning to the Duchess and Mother Shipton, who of course knew the facts of their associate's defection. "They'll find out the truth about us *all* when they find out anything," he added, significantly, "and there's no good frightening them now."

Tom Simson not only put all his worldly store at the disposal of Mr. Oakhurst, but seemed to enjoy the prospect of their enforced seclusion. "We'll have a good camp for a week, and then the snow'll melt, and we'll all go back together." The cheerful gaiety of the young man, and Mr. Oakhurst's calm infected the others. The Innocent, with the aid of pine-boughs, extemporized a thatch for the roofless cabin, and the Duchess directed Piney in the rearrangement of the interior with a taste and tact that opened the blue eyes of that provincial maiden to their fullest extent. "I reckon now you're used to fine things at Poker Flat," said Piney. The Duchess turned away sharply to conceal something that reddened her cheeks through its professional tint, and Mother Shipton requested Piney not to "chatter." But when Mr. Oakhurst returned from a weary search for the trail, he heard the sound of happy laughter echoed from the rocks. He stopped in some alarm, and his thoughts first naturally reverted to the whiskey, which he had prudently *cachéd*. "And yet it don't somehow sound like whiskey," said the gambler. It was not until he caught sight of the blazing fire through the still blinding storm and the group around it, that he settled to the conviction that it was "square fun."

Whether Mr. Oakhurst had *cachéd* his cards with the whiskey as something debarred the free access of the community, I cannot say. It was certain that, in Mother Shipton's words, he "didn't say cards once" during that evening. Haply the time was beguiled by an accordion, produced somewhat ostentatiously by Tom Simson from his pack. Notwithstanding some difficulties attending the manipulation of this instrument, Piney Woods managed to pluck several reluctant melodies from its keys, to an accompaniment by the Innocent on a pair of bone castanets. But the crowning festivity of the evening was reached in a rude camp-meeting hymn, which the lovers, joining hands, sang with great earnestness and vociferation. I fear that a certain defiant tone and Covenanter's swing to its chorus, rather than any devotional quality, caused it speedily to infect the others, who at last joined in the refrain:—

"I'm proud to live in the service of
the Lord,
And I'm bound to die in His army."

The pines rocked, the storm eddied and whirled above the miserable group, and the flames of their altar leaped heavenward, as if in token of the vow.

At midnight the storm abated, the rolling clouds parted, and the stars glittered keenly above the sleeping camp. Mr. Oakhurst, whose professional habits had enabled him to live on the smallest possible amount of sleep, in dividing the watch with Tom Simson, somehow managed to take upon himself the greater part of that duty. He excused himself to the Innocent by saying that he had "often

been a week without sleep." "Doing what?" asked Tom. "Poker!" replied Oakhurst, sententiously; "when a man gets a streak of luck—nigger-luck—he don't get tired. The luck gives in first. Luck," continued the gambler, reflectively, "is a mighty queer thing. All you know about it for certain is that it's bound to change. And it's finding out when it's going to change that makes you. We've had a streak of bad luck since we left Poker Flat—you come along, and slap you get into it, too. If you can hold your cards right along you're all right. For," added the gambler, with cheerful irrelevance—

"'I'm proud to live in the service of the Lord,
And I'm bound to die in His army.'"

The third day came, and the sun, looking through the white-curtained valley, saw the outcasts divide their slowly decreasing store of provisions for the morning meal. It was one of the peculiarities of that mountain climate that its rays diffused a kindly warmth over the wintry landscape, as if in regretful commiseration of the past. But it revealed drift on drift of snow piled high around the hut—a hopeless, uncharted, trackless sea of white lying below the rocky shores to which the castaways still clung. Through the marvellously clear air the smoke of the pastoral village of Poker Flat rose miles away. Mother Shipton saw it, and from a remote pinnacle of her rocky fastness, hurled in that direction a final malediction. It was her last vituperative attempt, and perhaps for that reason was invested with a certain degree of sublimity. It did her good, she privately informed the Duchess. "Just you go out there and cuss, and see." She then set herself to the task of amusing "the child," as she and the Duchess were pleased to call Piney. Piney was no chicken, but it was a soothing and original theory of the pair thus to account for the fact that she didn't swear and wasn't improper.

When night crept up again through the gorges, the reedy notes of the accordion rose and fell in fitful spasms and long-drawn gasps by the flickering camp-fire. But music failed to fill entirely the aching void left by insufficient food, and a new diversion was proposed by Piney—story-telling. Neither Mr. Oakhurst nor his female companions caring to relate their personal experiences, this plan would have failed, too, but for the Innocent. Some months before he had chanced upon a stray copy of Mr. Pope's ingenious translation of the Iliad. He now proposed to narrate the principal incidents of that poem—having thoroughly mastered the argument and fairly forgotten the words—in the current vernacular of Sandy Bar. And so for the rest of that night the Homeric demigods again walked the earth. Trojan bully and wily Greek wrestled in the winds, and the great pines in the cañon seemed to bow to the wrath of the son of Peleus. Mr. Oakhurst listened with quiet satisfaction. Most especially was he interested in the fate of "Ash-heels," as the Innocent persisted in denominating the "swift-footed Achilles."

So with small food and much of Homer and the accordion, a week passed over the heads of the outcasts. The

sun again forsook them, and again from leaden skies the snow-flakes were sifted over the land. Day by day closer around them drew the snowy circle, until at last they looked from their prison over drifted walls of drizzling white, that towered twenty feet above their heads. It became more and more difficult to replenish their fires, even from the fallen trees beside them, now half hidden in the drifts. And yet no one complained. The lovers turned from the dreary prospect, and looked into each other's eyes, and were happy. Mr. Oakhurst settled himself coolly to the losing game before him. The Duchess, more cheerful than she had been, assumed the care of Piney. Only Mother Shipton—once the strongest of the party—seemed to sicken and fade. At midnight on the tenth day she called Oakhurst to her side. "I'm going," she said, in a voice of querulous weakness, "but don't say anything about it. Don't waken the kids. Take the bundle from under my head and open it." Mr. Oakhurst did so. It contained Mother Shipton's rations for the last week, untouched. "Give 'em to the child," she said, pointing to the sleeping Piney. "You've starved yourself," said the gambler. "That's what they call it," said the woman, querulously, as she lay down again, and, turning her face to the wall, passed quietly away.

The accordion and the bones were put aside that day, and Homer was forgotten. When the body of Mother Shipton had been committed to the snow, Mr. Oakhurst took the Innocent aside, and showed him a pair of snow-shoes, which he had fashioned from the old pack-saddle. "There's one chance in a hundred to save her yet," he said, pointing to Piney; "but it's there," he added, pointing toward Poker Flat. "If you can reach there in two days she's safe." "And you?" asked Tom Simson. "I'll stay here," was the curt reply.

The lovers parted with a long embrace. "You are not going, too?" said the Duchess, as she saw Mr. Oakhurst apparently waiting to accompany him. "As far as the cañon," he replied. He turned suddenly, and kissed the Duchess, leaving her pallid face aflame, and her trembling limbs rigid with amazement.

Night came, but not Mr. Oakhurst. It brought the storm again and the whirling snow. Then the Duchess, feeding the fire, found that some one had quietly piled beside the hut enough fuel to last a few days longer. The tears rose to her eyes, but she hid them from Piney.

The women slept but little. In the morning, looking into each other's faces, they read their fate. Neither spoke; but Piney, accepting the position of the stronger, drew near and placed her arm around the Duchess's waist. They kept this attitude for the rest of the day. That night the storm reached its greatest fury, and, rending asunder the protecting pines, invaded the very hut.

Toward morning they found themselves unable to feed the fire, which gradually died away. As the embers slowly blackened, the Duchess crept closer to Piney, and broke the silence of many hours: "Piney, can you pray?" "No, dear," said Piney, simply. The Duchess, without knowing exactly why, felt relieved, and, putting her head upon Piney's shoulder, spoke no more. And so reclining, the younger and purer

pillowing the head of her soiled sister upon her virgin breast, they fell asleep.

The wind lulled as if it feared to waken them. Feathery drifts of snow, shaken from the long pine-boughs, flew like white-winged birds, and settled about them as they slept. The moon through the rifted clouds looked down upon what had been the camp. But all human stain, all trace of earthly travail, was hidden beneath the spotless mantle mercifully flung from above.

They slept all that day and the next, nor did they waken when voices and footsteps broke the silence of the camp. And when pitying fingers brushed the snow from their wan faces, you could scarcely have told, from the equal peace that dwelt upon them, which was she that had sinned. Even the law of Poker Flat recognized this, and turned away, leaving them still locked in each other's arms.

But at the head of the gulch, on one of the largest pine-trees, they found the deuce of clubs pinned to the bark with a bowie-knife. It bore the following, written in pencil, in a firm hand:—

†

BENEATH THIS TREE
LIES THE BODY
OF
JOHN OAKHURST,
WHO STRUCK A STREAK OF BAD LUCK
ON THE 23RD OF NOVEMBER, 1850,
AND
HANDED IN HIS CHECKS
ON THE 7TH DECEMBER, 1850.

‡

And pulseless and cold, with a Derringer by his side and a bullet in his heart, though still calm as in life, beneath the snow lay he who was at once the strongest and yet the weakest of the outcasts of Poker Flat.

The Hunter

In certain valleys there was a hunter. Day by day he went to hunt for wild-fowl in the woods; and it chanced that once he stood on the shores of a large lake. While he stood waiting in the rushes for the coming of the birds, a great shadow fell on him, and in the water he saw a reflection. He looked up to the sky; but the thing was gone. Then a burning desire came over him to see once again that reflection in the water, and all day he watched and waited; but night came, and it had not returned. Then he went home with his empty bag, moody and silent. His comrades came questioning about him to know the reason, but he answered them nothing; he sat alone and brooded. Then his friend came to him, and to him he spoke.

"I have seen today," he said, "that which I never saw before—a vast white bird, with silver wings outstretched, sailing in the everlasting blue. And now it is as though a great fire burnt within my breast. It was but a sheen, a shimmer, a reflection in the water; but now I desire nothing more on earth than to hold her."

His friend laughed.

"It was but a beam playing on the water, or the shadow of your own head. Tomorrow you will forget her," he said

But tomorrow, and tomorrow, and to-

morrow the hunter walked alone. He sought in the forest and in the woods, by the lakes and among the rushes, but he could not find her. He shot no more wild-fowl; what were they to him?

"What ails him?" said his comrades.

"He is mad, " said one.

"No, but he is worse," said another; "he would see that which none of us have seen, and make himself a wonder."

"Come, let us forswear his company," said all.

So the hunter walked alone.

One night, as he wandered in the shade, very heart-sore and weeping, an old man stood before him, grander and taller than the sons of men.

"Who are you?" asked the hunter.

"I am Wisdom," answered the old man; "but some men called me Knowledge. All my life I have grown in these valleys; but no man sees me till he has sorrowed much. The eyes must be washed with tears that are to behold me; and, according as a man has suffered, I speak."

And the hunter cried—

"Oh, you who have lived here so long, tell me, what is that great wild bird I have seen sailing in the blue? They would have me believe she is a dream; the shadow of my own head."

The old man smiled.

"Her name is Truth. He who has once seen her never rests again. Till death he desires her."

And the hunter cried—

"Oh, tell me where I may find her."

But the man said,

"You have not suffered enough," and went.

Then the hunter took from his breast the shuttle of Imagination, and wound on it the thread of his Wishes; and all night he sat and wove a net.

In the morning he spread the golden net open on the ground, and into it he threw a few grains of credulity, which his father had left him, and which he kept in his breast-pocket. They were like white puff-balls, and when you trod on them a brown dust flew out. Then he sat by to see what would happen. The first that came into the net was a snow-white bird, with dove's eyes, and he sang a beautiful song—"A human-God! a human-God! a human-God!" it sang. The second that came was black and mystical, with dark, lovely eyes, that looked into the depths of your soul, and he sang only this—"Immortality!"

And the hunter took them both in his arms, for he said—

"They are surely of the beautiful family of Truth."

Then came another, green and gold, who sang in a shrill voice, like one crying in the market-place,—"Reward after Death! Reward after Death!"

And he said—

"You are not so fair; but you are fair too," and he took it.

And others came, brightly coloured, singing pleasant songs, till all the grains were finished. And the hunter gathered all his birds together, and built a strong iron cage called a new creed, and put all his birds in it.

Then the people came about dancing and singing.

"Oh, happy hunter!" they cried. "Oh, wonderful man! Oh, delightful birds! Oh, lovely songs!"

No one asked where the birds had come from, nor how they had been caught; but they danced and sang be-

fore them. And the hunter too was glad, for he said—

"Surely Truth is among them. In time she will moult her feathers, and I shall see her snow-white form."

But the time passed, and the people sang and danced; but the hunter's heart grew heavy. He crept alone, as of old, to weep; the terrible desire had wakened again in his breast. One day, as he sat alone weeping, it chanced that Wisdom met him. He told the old man what he had done.

And Wisdom smiled sadly.

"Many men," he said, "have spread that net for Truth; but they have never found her. On the grains of credulity she will not feed; in the net of wishes her feet cannot be held; in the air of these valleys she will not breathe. The birds you have caught are of the brood of Lies. Lovely and beautiful, but still lies; Truth knows them not."

And the hunter cried out in bitterness—

"And must I then sit still to be devoured of this great burning?"

And the old man said—

"Listen, and in that you have suffered much and wept much, I will tell you what I know. He who sets out to search for Truth must leave these valleys of superstition for ever, taking with him not one shred that has belonged to them. Alone he must wander down into the Land of Absolute Negation and Denial; he must abide there; he must resist temptation; when the light breaks he must arise and follow it into the country of dry sunshine. The mountains of stern reality will rise before him; he must climb them; *beyond* them lies Truth."

"And he will hold her fast! he will hold her in his hands!" the hunter cried.

Wisdom shook his head.

"He will never see her, never hold her. The time is not yet."

"Then there is no hope?" cried the hunter.

"There is this," said Wisdom. "Some men have climbed on those mountains; circle above circle of bare rock they have scaled; and, wandering there, in those high regions, some have chanced to pick up on the ground, one white, silver feather dropped from the wing of Truth. And it shall come to pass," said the old man, raising himself prophetically and pointing with his finger to the sky, "it shall come to pass, that, when enough of those silver feathers shall have been gathered by the hands of men, and shall have been woven into a cord, and the cord into a net, *that* in that net Truth may be captured. *Nothing but Truth can hold Truth.*"

The hunter arose. "I will go," he said.

But Wisdom detained him.

"Mark you well—who leaves these valleys *never* returns to them. Though he should weep tears of blood seven days and nights upon the confines, he can never put his foot across them. Left—they are left for ever. Upon the road which you would travel there is no reward offered. Who goes, goes freely—for the great love that is in him. The work is his reward."

"I go," said the hunter; "but upon the mountains, tell me, which path shall I take?"

"I am the child of The-Accumulated-Knowledge-of-Ages," said the man; "I

can walk only where many men have trodden. On these mountains few feet have passed; each man strikes out a path for himself. He goes at his own peril; my voice he hears no more. I may follow after him, but I cannot go before him."

Then Knowledge vanished.

And the hunter turned. He went to his cage, and with his hands broke down the bars, and the jagged iron tore his flesh. It is sometimes easier to build than to break.

One by one he took his plumed birds and let them fly. But, when he came to his dark-plumed bird, he held it, and looked into its beautiful eyes, and the bird uttered its low deep cry—"Immortality!"

And he said quickly, "I cannot part with it. It is not heavy; it eats no food. I will hide it in my breast: I will take it with me." And he buried it there, and covered it over with his cloak.

But the thing he had hidden grew heavier, heavier, heavier—till it lay on his breast like lead. He could not move with it. He could not leave those valleys with it. Then again he took it out and looked at it.

"Oh, my beautiful, my heart's own!" he cried, "may I not keep you?"

He opened his hands sadly.

"Go," he said. "It may happen that in Truth's song one note is like to yours; but *I* shall never hear it."

Sadly he opened his hand, and the bird flew from him for ever.

Then from the shuttle of Imagination he took the thread of his wishes, and threw it on the ground; and the empty shuttle he put into his breast, for the thread was made in those valleys, but the shuttle came from an unknown country. He turned to go, but now the people came about him, howling.

"Fool, hound, demented lunatic!" they cried. "How dared you break your cage and let the birds fly?"

The hunter spoke; but they would not hear him.

"Truth! who is she? Can you eat her? can you drink her? Who has ever seen her? Your birds were real: all could hear them sing! Oh, fool! vile reptile! atheist!" they cried, "you pollute the air."

"Come, let us take up stones and stone him," cried some.

"What affair is it of ours?" said others. "Let the idiot go;" and went away. But the rest gathered up stones and mud and threw at him. At last, when he was bruised and cut, the hunter crept away into the woods. And it was evening about him.

He wandered on and on, and the shade grew deeper. He was on the borders now of the land where it is always night. Then he stepped into it, and there was no light there. With his hands he groped; but each branch as he touched it broke off, and the earth was covered with cinders. At every step his foot sank in, and a fine cloud of impalpable ashes flew up into his face; and it was dark. So he sat down upon a stone and buried his face in his hands, to wait in the Land of Negation and Denial till the light came.

And it was night in his heart also.

Then from the marshes to his right and left cold mists arose and closed about him. A fine, imperceptible rain fell in the dark, and great drops gath-

ered on his hair and clothes. His heart beat slowly, and a numbness crept through all his limbs. Then, looking up, two merry wisp lights came dancing. He lifted his head to look at them. Nearer, nearer they came. So warm, so bright, they danced like stars of fire. They stood before him at last. From the centre of the radiating flame in one looked out a woman's face, laughing, dimpled, with streaming yellow hair. In the centre of the other were merry laughing ripples, like the bubbles on a glass of wine. They danced before him.

"Who are you," asked the hunter, "who alone come to me in my solitude and darkness?"

"We are the twins Sensuality," they cried. "Our father's name is Human Nature, and our mother's name is Excess. We are as old as the hills and rivers, as old as the first man; but we never die," they laughed.

"Oh, let me wrap my arms about you!" cried the first; "they are soft and warm. Your heart is frozen now, but I will make it beat. Oh, come to me!"

"I will pour my hot life into you," said the second; "your brain is numb, and your limbs are dead now; but they shall live with a fierce free life. Oh, let me pour it in!"

"Oh, follow us," they cried, "and live with us. Nobler hearts than yours have sat here in this darkness to wait; and they have come to us and we to them; and they have never left us, never. All else is a delusion, but we are real, we are real. Truth is a shadow; the valleys of superstition are a farce; the earth is of ashes, the trees all rotten; but we—feel us—we live! You cannot doubt us. Feel us, how warm we are! Oh, come to us! Come with us!"

Nearer and nearer round his head they hovered, and the cold drops melted on his forehead. The bright light shone into his eyes, dazzling him, and the frozen blood began to run. And he said—

"Yes; why should I die here in this awful darkness? They are warm, they melt my frozen blood!" and he stretched out his hands to take them.

Then in a moment there arose before him the image of the thing he had loved, and his hand dropped to his side.

"Oh, come to us!" they cried.

But he buried his face.

"You dazzle my eyes," he cried, "you make my heart warm; but you cannot give me what I desire. I will wait here—wait till I die. Go!"

He covered his face with his hands and would not listen; and when he looked up again they were two twinkling stars, that vanished in the distance.

And the long, long night rolled on.

All who leave the valley of superstition pass through that dark land; but some go through it in a few days, some linger there for months, some for years, and some die there.

At last for the hunter a faint light played along the horizon, and he rose to follow it; and he reached that light at last, and stepped into the broad sunshine. Then before him rose the almighty mountains of Dry-facts and Realities. The clear sunshine played on them, and the tops were lost in the clouds. At the foot many paths ran up. An exultant cry burst from

the hunter. He chose the straightest and began to climb; and the rocks and ridges resounded with his song. They had exaggerated; after all, it was not so high, nor was the road so steep! A few days, a few weeks, a few months at most, and then the top! Not one feather only would he pick up; he would gather all that other men had found—weave the net—capture Truth—hold her fast—touch her with his hands—clasp her!

He laughed in the merry sunshine, and sang loud. Victory was very near. Nevertheless, after a while the path grew steeper. He needed all his breath for climbing, and the singing died away. On the right and left rose huge rocks, devoid of lichen or moss, and in the lava-like earth chasms yawned. Here and there he saw a sheen of white bones. Now, too, the path began to grow less and less marked; then it became a mere trace, with a foot-mark here and there; then it ceased altogether. He sang no more, but struck forth a path for himself, until he reached a mighty wall of rock, smooth and without break, stretching as far as the eye could see. "I will rear a stair against it; and once this wall climbed, I shall be almost there," he said bravely; and worked. With his shuttle of imagination he dug out stones; but half of them would not fit, and half a month's work would roll down because those below were ill chosen. But the hunter worked on, saying always to himself, "Once this wall climbed, I shall be almost there. This great work ended!"

At last he came out upon the top, and he looked about him. Far below rolled the white mist over the valleys of superstition, and above him towered the mountains. They had seemed low before; they were of an immeasurable height now, from crown to foundation surrounded by walls of rock, that rose tier above tier in mighty circles. Upon them played the eternal sunshine. He uttered a wild cry. He bowed himself on to the earth, and when he rose his face was white. In absolute silence he walked on. He was very silent now. In those high regions the rarefied air is hard to breathe by those born in the valleys; every breath he drew hurt him, and the blood oozed out from the tips of his fingers. Before the next wall of rock he began to work. The height of this seemed infinite, and he said nothing. The sound of his tool rang night and day upon the iron rocks into which he cut steps. Years passed over him, yet he worked on; but the wall towered up always above him to heaven. Sometimes he prayed that a little moss or lichen might spring up on those bare walls to be a companion to him; but it never came.

And the years rolled on: he counted them by the steps he had cut—a few for a year—only a few. He sang no more; he said no more, "I will do this or that"—he only worked. And at night, when the twilight settled down, there looked out at him from the holes and crevices in the rocks strange wild faces.

"Stop your work, you lonely man, and speak to us," they cried.

"My salvation is in work. If I should stop but for one moment you would creep down upon me," he replied. And they put out their long necks further.

"Look down into the crevice at your feet," they said. "See what lie there—white bones! As brave and strong a man as you climbed to these rocks. And he looked up. He saw there was no use in striving; he would never hold Truth, never see her, never find her. So he lay down here, for he was very tired. He went to sleep for ever. He put himself to sleep. Sleep is very tranquil. You are not lonely when you are asleep, neither do your hands ache, nor your heart." And the hunter laughed between his teeth.

"Have I torn from my heart all that was dearest; have I wandered alone in the land of night; have I resisted temptation; have I dwelt where the voice of my kind is never heard, and laboured alone, to lie down and be food for you, ye harpies?"

He laughed fiercely; and the Echoes of Despair slunk away, for the laugh of a brave, strong heart is as a death-blow to them.

Nevertheless they crept out again and looked at him.

"Do you know that your hair is white?" they said, "that your hands begin to tremble like a child's? Do you see that the point of your shuttle is gone?—it is cracked already. If you should ever climb this stair," they said, "it will be your last. You will never climb another."

And he answered, *"I know it!"* and worked on.

The old, thin hands cut the stones ill and jaggedly, for the fingers were stiff and bent. The beauty and the strength of the man was gone.

At last, an old, wizened, shrunken face looked out above the rocks. It saw the eternal mountains rise with walls to the white clouds; but its work was done.

The old hunter folded his tired hands and lay down by the precipice where he had worked away his life. It was the sleeping time at last. Below him over the valleys rolled the thick white mist. Once it broke; and through the gap the dying eyes looked down on the trees and fields of their childhood. From afar seemed borne to him the cry of his own wild birds, and he heard the noise of people singing as they danced. And he thought he heard among them the voices of his old comrades; and he saw far off the sunlight shine on his early home. And great tears gathered in the hunter's eyes.

"Oh! they who die there do not die alone," he cried.

Then the mists rolled together again; and he turned his eyes away.

"I have sought," he said, "for long years I have laboured; but I have not found her. I have not rested, I have not repined, and I have not seen her; now my strength is gone. Where I lie down worn out, other men will stand, young and fresh. By the steps that I have cut they will climb; by the stairs that I have built, they will mount. They will never know the name of the man who made them. At the clumsy work they will laugh; when the stones roll they will curse me. But they will mount, and on *my* work; they will climb, and by *my* stair! They will find her, and through me! And no man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself."

The tears rolled from beneath the shriveled eyelids. If Truth had ap-

peared above him in the clouds now he could not have seen her, the mist of death was in his eyes.

"My soul hears their glad step coming," he said; "and they shall mount! they shall mount!" He raised his shrivelled hand to his eyes.

Then slowly from the white sky above, through the still air, came something falling, falling, falling. Softly it fluttered down, and dropped on to the breast of the dying man. He felt it with his hands. It was a feather. He died holding it.

The Dancing Courtiers

THE Emperor of Lilliput had a mind, one day, to entertain me with several of the country shows, wherein they exceeded all the nations I have known, both for dexterity and magnificence. I was diverted by none so much as that of the rope-dancers, performed upon a slender white thread, extended about two feet and twelve inches from the ground. This diversion is only practised by those persons who are candidates for great employments and high favor at court. They are trained in this art from their youth, and are not always of noble birth or liberal education. When a great office is vacant, either by death or disgrace (which often happens), five or six of these candidates petition the Emperor to entertain his Majesty and the court with a dance on the rope, and whoever jumps the highest without falling, succeeds in the office.

Very often the chief Ministers themselves are commanded to show their skill, and to convince the Emperor that they have not lost their faculty. Flimnap, the Treasurer, is allowed to cut a caper on the straight rope at least an inch higher than any other lord in the whole empire. I have seen him do the somerset several times together upon a trencher fixed upon a rope, which is no thicker than common pack-thread in England. My friend Reldresal, principal Secretary for Private Affairs, is, in my opinion, the second after the Treasurer; the rest of the court officers are much on a par.

These diversions are often attended with fatal accidents, whereof great numbers are on record. I myself have seen two or three candidates break a limb. But the danger is much greater when the Ministers themselves are commanded to show their dexterity; for by contending to excel themselves and their fellows they strain so far that there is hardly one of them who has not received a fall, and some of them two or three. I was assured that a year or two before my arrival Flimnap would infallibly have broken his neck if one of the King's cushions, that accidentally lay on the ground, had not weakened the force of his fall.

There is likewise another diversion which is only shown before the Emperor and Empress, and the First Minister, upon particular occasion. The Emperor lays on the table three fine silken threads of six inches long; one is blue, the other red, and the third green. These threads are proposed as prizes for those

persons whom the Emperor has a mind to distinguish by a peculiar mark of his favor. The ceremony is performed in his Majesty's great chamber of state, where the candidates are to undergo a trial of dexterity, very different from the former, and such as I have not observed in any other country of the New or Old World. The Emperor holds a stick in his hands, both ends parallel to the horizon, while the candidates, advancing one by one, sometimes leap over the stick, sometimes creep under it, backward and forward, several times, according as the stick is advanced or depressed. Sometimes the Emperor holds one end of the stick and the First Minister the other; sometimes the Minister has it entirely to himself. Whoever performs his part with the most agility, and holds out the longest in leaping and creeping, is rewarded with the blue-colored silk; the red is given to the next, and the green to the third, which they all wear girt twice about the middle, and you see few great persons about this court who are not adorned with one of these girdles.

The Crucifix

On one of my frequent excursions to the Southern Cordillera, I had occasion to observe in a small village church a very curious crucifix. Above the altar it rose between curtains of white muslin relieved with tears of silver. The face of the Christ, His attitude of suffering, His woeful and yet hopeful expression, were those of all Christ faces I had ever seen. The arms, however, were quite strange. The hands had been freed from the nails that fastened them to the cross and were raised to heaven in a beseeching gesture as though begging for mercy.

I could not help expressing wonderment at this singular crucifix, so different from all the images which have been worshipped in churches and temples since the day the meek and lowly Revolutionist of Galilea was crucified. So I asked the priest who accompanied me why this Christ did not have His hands nailed to the cross.

He told me a weird story. It was one of those legends which must have originated centuries ago, are transmitted from mouth to mouth, travel to and fro with the various generations, and never actually die out, as though they were the imperishable soul of the age which gave them birth.

"Many years ago," he said, "there lived a brigand who was the terror of these lonely regions. Nothing could daunt him, not the authorities, nor the soldiers, nor the peasants who pursued him constantly as though he were the evil genius of the wilderness. His name was Juan Garray.

"This redoubtable brigand, however, stood in abject fear of God. His obtuse and darkened mind recognized no master, no judge except the Christ whom he had been brought up to worship and whom he saw in his hours of religious terror transform Himself into the wrathful God, the terrible Jehovah of the Bible. They say that he never started on one of his dangerous forays without commending himself and the outcome of his expeditions to the pitiless Judge he feared so much. A distorted religious sense caused him to mutter a prayer while stabbing a man to death.

"In the lonely remoteness of the Andean valleys, where man forgets the meaning of time and of life, minds, growing barren and sleepy, are only capable of one feeling made up of love, respect, and fear for the thing beyond the azure of the firmament, which smiles in hours of sunshine, but rages and thunders in hours of storm.

"Juan Garray was a mere animal hounded by mysterious terrors. When, in some dark mountain-pass, his stiletto cut the thread of life, he thought to see in the darkness the wrathful arm of his Maker beckoning to him, in a tragic, threatening gesture.

"As the years passed, as the number of his crimes increased, the bandit's conscience was filled with strange fears, with horrible visions like unto miasma rising from the mire. His band was

beginning to lose the respect it had had for him in former days. His followers saw him grow more and more silent like a beaten man, enthralled by the obsession of the vengeful God which pursued him everywhere.

"Once, in a supreme effort, he conjured up again all his vigor of old, his daring, his strength, his shrewd cunning. He gathered his men on the far-away ranch where he kept himself and on a summer evening planned with them an attack on a large *hacienda.*

"That very night the band set out. They proceeded slowly in the darkness, bold yet cautious. There was no moon, no glimmer of light from the sky. The night was as black as a bad conscience. Juan Garray headed the march, taciturn, meditative. He made the sign of the cross when the various buildings of the *hacienda* came in sight. In the distance a dog barked at the approaching shadows. The bandits listened to Garray's raucous orders while the horses were champing nervously. Having given every man his direction, Garray rushed ahead, and yet, somehow, that night a panicky fear filled his brain. The conscience of the old bandit, defeated by life, was gasping its last.

"It would be useless to describe the scenes of horror which followed. In the darkness strange silhouettes were seen running, pursued by others, noises, calls for help, cries of agony, the oaths of the bandits, signals of alarm. Maddened, Garray sought the master of the house in vain. Once he thought he heard a moan in one of the rooms. He pushed the door open.

"At the foot of a crucifix a candle was burning. Garray stopped. He shook with fear. He lifted the candle to look at the face of the Christ. The bandit read in those pallid and blood-smeared features such an expression of reproach, of wrath, and condemnation that, frozen with horror, he groveled on the floor, mumbling in a raucous whisper:

"'Don't kill me, Master; don't kill me!'

"The next day they found him dead. His pale visage no longer expressed fear. Death had softened its coarseness. On his body, stretched at full length, lay the crucifix. The Christ's face radiated with kindness. His arms, freed from the cross, were raised to heaven and His hands were clasped in prayer. The Christ, whom no human being had placed on the brigand's corpse, was asking God's clemency for the dead man."

Such is the legend the old priest told me, adding: "Before this crucifix, many souls burdened with their misdeeds come to beg forgiveness for their sins."

An Adventure in India

All the world knows that Pythagoras, while he resided in India, attended the school of the Gymnosophists, and learned the language of beasts and plants. One day, while he was walking in a meadow near the seashore, he heard these words:

"How unfortunate that I was born an herb! I scarcely attain two inches in height, when a voracious monster,

an horrid animal, tramples me under his large feet; his jaws are armed with rows of sharp scythes, by which he cuts, then grinds, and then swallows me. Men call this monster a sheep. I do not suppose there is in the whole creation a more detestable creature."

Pythagoras proceeded a little way and found an oyster yawning on a small rock. He had not yet adopted that admirable law, by which we are enjoined not to eat those animals which have a resemblance to us. He had scarcely taken up the oyster to swallow it, when it spoke these affecting words:

"O Nature, how happy is the herb, which is, as I am, thy work! though it be cut down, it is regenerated and immortal; and we, poor oysters, in vain are defended by a double cuirass: villains eat us by the dozens at their breakfasts, and all is over with us forever. What an horrible fate is that of an oyster, and how barbarous are men!"

Pythagoras shuddered; he felt the enormity of the crime he had nearly committed; he begged pardon of the oyster with tears in his eyes, and replaced it very carefully on the rock.

As he was returning to the city, profoundly meditating on this adventure, he saw spiders devouring flies; swallows eating spiders, and sparrow-hawks eating swallows: "None of these," said he, "are philosophers."

On his entrance, Pythagoras was stunned, bruised, and thrown down by a lot of tatterdemalions, who were running and crying: "Well done, he fully deserved it." "Who? What?" said Pythagoras, as he was getting up. The people continued running and crying: "O how delightful it will be to see them boiled!"

Pythagoras supposed they meant lentiles, or some other vegetables: but he was in an error; they meant two poor Indians. "Oh!" said Pythagoras, "these Indians, without doubt, are two great philosophers weary of their lives; they are desirous of regenerating under other forms; it affords pleasure to a man to change his place of residence, though he may be but indifferently lodged: there is no disputing on taste."

He proceeded with the mob to the public square, where he perceived a lighted pile of wood, and a bench opposite to it, which was called a tribunal. On this bench judges were seated, each of them had a cow's tail in his hand, and a cap on his head, with ears resembling those of the animal which bore Silenus when he came into that country with Bacchus, after having crossed the Erytrean sea without wetting a foot, and stopping the sun and moon; as it is recorded with great fidelity in the Orphicks.

Among these judges there was an honest man with whom Pythagoras was acquainted. The Indian sage explained to the sage of Samos the nature of that festival to be given to the people of India.

"These two Indians," said he, "have not the least desire to be committed to the flames. My grave brethren have adjudged them to be burnt; one for saying, that the substance of Xaca is not that of Brahma; and the other for supposing, that the approbation of the Supreme Being was to be obtained at the point of death without holding a cow by the tail; 'Because,' said he, 'we may be virtuous at all times, and we

cannot always have a cow to lay hold of just when we may have occasion.' The good women of the city were greatly terrified at two such heretical opinions; they would not allow the judges a moment's peace until they had ordered the execution of those unfortunate men."

Pythagoras was convinced that from the herb up to man, there were many causes of chagrin. However, he obliged the judges and even the devotees to listen to reason, which happened only at that time.

He went afterwards and preached toleration at Crotona; but a bigot set fire to his house, and he was burnt—the man who had delivered the two Hindoos from the flames? Let those save themselves who can!

William Tell

In the Swiss town the Bailiff, Hermann Gessler, was not easy; because he had an evil conscience it seemed to him that the people began to raise their heads, and to show more and more boldness. Therefore he set the ducal hat of Austria upon a pole in Uri, and ordered that every one who passed before it should do it reverence. By this means he wished to discover who was opposed to Austria. And William Tell, the archer of Burglen, one of the men of Rütli, passed before it, but he did not bow. He was immediately carried to the Bailiff, who angrily said:

"Insolent archer, I will punish thee by means of thine own craft. I will place an apple on the head of thy little son; shoot it off, and fail not."

And they bound the child, and placed an apple on his head, and led the archer far away. He took aim—the bow-string twanged, the arrow pierced the apple. All the people shouted for joy; but Gessler said to the archer: "Why didst thou take a second arrow?" Tell answered: "If the first had not pierced the apple, the second would assuredly have pierced thy heart."

This terrified the Bailiff, and he ordered the archer to be seized, and carried to a boat in which he was himself about to embark for Küssnacht. He did not think it prudent to imprison Tell in Uri, on account of the people; but to drag him into foreign captivity was contrary to the privileges of the country. Therefore the Bailiff feared an assembling of the people, and hastily departed, in spite of a strong head-wind. The sea rose and the waves dashed foaming over the boat, so that all were alarmed and the boatmen disheartened. The farther they went on the lake the greater was the danger of death; for the steep mountains rose from the abyss of waters, like walls to the heavens. In great anxiety Gessler ordered the fetters to be removed from Tell, that he—an experienced steersman—might take the helm. But Tell steered toward the bare flank of the Axenberg, where a naked rock projects, like a small shell, into the lake. There was a shock—a spring; Tell was on the rock—the boat out upon the lake.

The freed man climbed the mountains and fled across the land of

Schwytz; and he thought in his troubled heart: "Whither can I fly from the wrath of the tyrant? Even if I escape from his pursuit, he has my wife and child in my house as hostages. What may not Gessler do to my family, when Landenberg put out the eyes of the old man of Melchthal on account of a servant's broken fingers? Where is the judgment-seat before which I can cite Gessler, when the king himself no longer listens to the complaints of the people? As law has no authority, and there is none to judge between thee and me, thou and I, Gessler, are both without law, and self-preservation is our only judge. Either my innocent wife and child, and Fatherland, must fall, or—Bailiff Gessler—thou! Fall thou, and let liberty prevail."

So thought Tell; and with bow and arrow fled toward Küssnacht, and hid in the hollow-way near the village. Thither came the Bailiff; there the bow-string twanged; there the free arrow pierced the tyrant's heart. The whole people shouted for joy when they learned the death of the tyrant.

Balloon and Comet

THE cords were cut. The balloon rose with stately calmness into the air.

When it had reached an elevation of about 2,500 yards, Lieutenant Procope determined to maintain it at that level. A wire-work stove, suspended below the casing, and filled with lighted hay, served to keep the air in the interior at a proper temperature.

After a while the aeronauts began to survey everything above them, around them, and below them.

Beneath their feet was extended the basin of the Gallian Sea. An inconsiderable speck to the north marked the site of Gourbi Island. Ceuta and Gibraltar, which might have been expected in the west, had utterly disappeared. On the south rose the volcano, the extremity of the promontory that jutted out from the continent that formed the frame-work of the sea; while in every direction the strange soil, with its commixture of tellurium and gold, gleamed under the sun's rays with a perpetual iridescence.

Apparently rising with them in their ascent, the horizon was well defined. The sky above them was perfectly clear; but away in the north-west, in opposition to the sun, floated a new sphere, so small that it could not be an asteroid, but like a dim meteor. It was the fragment that the internal convulsion had rent from the surface of the comet, and which was now many thousands of leagues away, pursuing the new orbit into which it had been projected. During the hours of daylight it was far from distinct, but after nightfall it would assume a definite luster.

The object, however, of supreme interest was the great expanse of the terrestrial disc, which was rapidly drawing down obliquely toward them. It totally eclipsed an enormous portion of the firmament above, and approaching with an ever-increasing velocity, was now

within half its average distance from the moon. So close was it that the two poles could not be embraced in one focus. Irregular patches of greater or less brilliancy alternated on its surface, the brighter betokening the continents, the more somber indicating the oceans that absorbed the solar rays. Above there were broad white bands, darkened on the side averted from the sun, exhibiting a slow but unintermittent movement; these were the vapors that pervaded the terrestrial atmosphere.

But as the aeronauts were being hurried on at a speed of 70 miles a second, this vague aspect of the earth soon developed itself into definite outlines. Mountains and plains were no longer confused, the distinction between sea and shore was more plainly identified, and instead of being, as it were, depicted on a map, the surface of the earth appeared as though modeled in relief.

Twenty seven minutes past two, and the comet Gallia is only 72,000 miles from the terrestrial sphere; quicker and quicker is the velocity; ten minutes later, and they are only 36,000 miles apart!

The whole configuration of the earth is clear.

"Europe! Russia! France!" shout Procope, the count, and Servadac, the captain, almost in a breath.

And they are not mistaken. The eastern hemisphere lies before them in the full blaze of light, and there is no possibility of error in distinguishing continent from continent.

The surprise only kindled their emotion to yet keener intensity, and it would be hard to describe the excitement with which they gazed at the panorama that was before them. The crisis of peril was close at hand, but imagination overleaped all consideration of danger; and everything was absorbed in the one idea that they were again within reach of that circle of humanity from which they had supposed themselves severed forever.

And, truly, if they could have paused to study it, that panorama of the states of Europe which was outstretched before their eyes, was conspicuous for the fantastic resemblances with which Nature on the one hand, and international relations on the other, have associated them. There was England, marching like some stately dame toward the east, trailing her ample skirts and coroneted with the cluster of her little islets; Sweden and Norway, with their bristling spine of mountains, seemed like a splendid lion eager to spring down from the bosom of the ice-bound north; Russia, a gigantic polar bear, stood with its head toward Asia, its left paw resting upon Turkey, its right upon Mount Caucasus; Austria resembled a huge cat curled up and sleeping a watchful sleep; Spain, with Portugal as a pennant, like an unfurled banner, floated from the extremity of the continent; Turkey, like an insolent cock, appeared to clutch the shores of Asia with one claw, and the land of Greece with the other; Italy, as it were a foot and leg incased in a tight-fitting boot, was juggling deftly with the islands of Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica; Prussia, a formidable hatchet imbedded in the heart of Germany, its edge just grazing the frontiers of France; while France itself suggested a vigorous torso with Paris at its breast.

All at once Ben Zoof, the orderly, breaks the silence:

"Montmartre! I see Montmartre!"

And, smile at the absurdity as others might, nothing could induce the worthy orderly to surrender his belief that he could actually make out the features of his beloved home.

The only individual whose soul seemed unstirred by the approaching earth was Palmyrin Rosette, the professor. Leaning over the side of the car he kept his eyes fixed upon the abandoned comet, now floating about a mile and a half below him, bright in the general irradiation which was flooding the surrounding space.

Chronometer in hand, Lieutenant Procope stood marking the minutes and seconds as they fled; and the stillness which had once again fallen upon them all was only broken by his order to replenish the stove, that the montgolfier might retain its necessary level. Servadac and the count continued to gaze upon the earth with an eagerness that almost amounted to awe. The balloon was slightly in the rear of Gallia, a circumstance that augured somewhat favorably, because it might be presumed that if the comet preceded the balloon in its contact with the earth there would be a break in the suddenness of transfer from one atmosphere to the other.

The next question of anxiety was, where would the balloon alight? If upon terra firma, would it be in a place where adequate resources for safety would be at hand? If upon the ocean, would any passing vessel be within hail to rescue them from their critical position? Truly, as the count observed to his comrades, none but a Divine Pilot could steer them now.

"Forty-two minutes past!" said the lieutenant, and his voice seemed to thrill through the silence of expectation.

There were not 20,000 miles between the comet and the earth.

The calculated time of impact was 2 hours, 47 minutes, 35.6 seconds.

Five minutes more and collision must ensue.

But was it so? Just at this moment Lieutenant Procope observed that the comet deviated sensibly in an oblique course.

Was it possible that after all collision would not occur.

The deviation, however, was not great; it did not justify any anticipation that Gallia would merely graze the earth, as it had done before; it left it certain that the two bodies would impinge.

"No doubt," said Ben Zoof, "this time we shall stick together."

Another thought occurred. Was it not only too likely that, in the fusion of the two atmospheres, the balloon itself, in which they were being conveyed, would be rent into ribbons, and every one of its passengers hurled into destruction, so that not a Gallian should survive to tell the tale of their strange peregrinations?

Moments were precious; but Hector Servadac resolved that he would adopt a device to be sure that at least some record of their excursion in solar distances should survive themselves.

Tearing a leaf from his note-book he wrote down the name of the comet, the list of the fragments of the earth it had carried off, the names of his companions, and the date of the comet's aphelion; and having subscribed it with his signature turned to Nina and told her he

must have the carrier-pigeon which was nestling in her bosom.

The child's eyes filled with tears; she did not say a word, but imprinting a kiss upon its soft plumage, she surrendered it at once, and the message was hurriedly fastened to its neck. The bird wheeled round and round in a few circles that widened in their diameter, and quickly sank to an altitude in the comet's atmosphere much inferior to the balloon.

Some minutes more were thus consumed, and the interval of distance was reduced to less than 8,000 miles.

The velocity became inconceivably great, but the increased rate of motion was in no way perceptible; there was nothing to disturb the equilibrium of the car in which they were making their aerial adventure.

"Forty-six minutes!" announced the lieutenant.

The glowing expanse of the earth's disc seemed like a vast funnel, yawning to receive the comet and its atmosphere, balloon and all, into its open mouth.

"Forty-seven!" cried Procope.

There was half a minute yet. A thrill ran through every vein. A vibration quivered through the atmosphere. The montgolfier, elongated to its utmost stretch, was manifestly being sucked into a vortex. Every passenger in the quivering car involuntarily clung spasmodically to its sides, and as the two atmospheres amalgamated clouds accumulated in heavy masses, involving all around in dense obscurity, while flashes of lurid flame threw a weird glimmer on the scene.

In a mystery everyone found himself upon the earth again. They could not explain it, but here they were once more upon terrestrial soil.

Of the balloon not a vestige remained, and, contrary to previous computation, the comet had merely grazed the earth, and was traversing the regions of space, again far away.

Torture by Hope

MANY years ago, as evening was closing in, the venerable Pedro Arbuez d'Espila, sixth prior of the Dominicans of Segovia, and third Grand Inquisitor of Spain, followed by a *fra redemptor,* and preceded by two familiars of the Holy Office, the latter carrying lanterns, made their way to a subterranean dungeon. The bolt of a massive door creaked, and they entered a mephitic *in-pace,* where the dim light revealed between rings fastened to the wall a blood-stained rack, a brazier, and a jug. On a pile of straw, loaded with fetters and his neck encircled by an iron carcan, sat a haggard man, of uncertain age, clothed in rags.

This prisoner was no other than Rabbi Aser Abarbanel, a Jew of Arragon, who—accused of usury and pitiless scorn for the poor—had been daily subjected to torture for more than a year. Yet "his blindness was as dense as his hide," and he had refused to abjure his faith.

Proud of a filiation dating back thou-

sands of years, proud of his ancestors—for all Jews worthy of the name are vain of their blood—he descended Talmudically from Othoniel and consequently from Ipsiboa, the wife of the last judge of Israel, a circumstance which had sustained his courage amid incessant torture. With tears in his eyes at the thought of this resolute soul rejecting salvation, the venerable Pedro Arbuez d'Espila, approaching the shuddering rabbi, addressed him as follows:

"My son, rejoice: your trials here below are about to end. If in the presence of such obstinacy I was forced to permit, with deep regret, the use of great severity, my task of fraternal correction has its limits. You are the fig tree which, having failed so many times to bear fruit, at last withered, but God alone can judge your soul. Perhaps Infinite Mercy will shine upon you at the last moment! We must hope so. There are examples. So sleep in peace tonight. Tomorrow you will be included in the *auto da fé:* that is, you will be exposed to the *quémadero,* the symbolical flames of the Everlasting Fire: It burns, as you know, only at a distance, my son; and Death is at least two hours (often three) in coming, on account of the wet, iced bandages, with which we protect the heads and hearts of the condemned. There will be forty-three of you. Placed in the last row, you will have time to invoke God and offer to Him this baptism of fire, which is of the Holy Spirit. Hope in the Light, and rest."

With these words, having signed to his companions to unchain the prisoner, the prior tenderly embraced him. Then came the turn of the *fra redemptor,* who, in a low tone, entreated the Jew's forgiveness for what he had made him suffer for the purpose of redeeming him; then the two familiars silently kissed him. This ceremony over, the captive was left, solitary and bewildered, in the darkness.

Rabbi Aser Abarbanel, with parched lips and visage worn by suffering, at first gazed at the closed door with vacant eyes. Closed? The word unconsciously roused a vague fancy in his mind, the fancy that he had seen for an instant the light of the lanterns through a chink between the door and the wall. A morbid idea of hope, due to the weakness of his brain stirred his whole being. He dragged himself toward the strange *appearance.* Then, very gently and cautiously, slipping one finger into the crevice, he drew the door toward him. Marvelous! By an extraordinary accident the familiar who closed it had turned the huge key an instant before it struck the stone casing so that the rusty bolt not having entered the hole, the door again rolled on its hinges.

The rabbi ventured to glance outside. By the aid of a sort of luminous dusk he distinguished at first a semicircle of walls indented by winding stairs; and opposite him, at the top of five or six stone steps, a sort of black portal, opening into an immense corridor, whose first arches only were visible from below.

Stretching himself flat he crept to the threshold. Yes, it was really a corridor, but endless in length. A wan light illumined it: lamps suspended from the vaulted ceiling lightened at intervals the dull hue of the atmosphere—the distance was veiled in shadow. Not a single door appeared in the whole extent! Only on one side, the left, heavily

grated loopholes sunk in the walls, admitted a light which must be that of evening, for crimson bars at intervals rested on the flags of the pavement. What a terrible silence! Yet, yonder, at the far end of that passage there might be a doorway of escape! The Jew's vacillating hope was tenacious, for it was *the last.*

Without hesitating, he ventured on the flags, keeping close under the loopholes, trying to make himself part of the blackness of the long walls. He advanced slowly, dragging himself along on his breast, forcing back the cry of pain when some raw wound sent a keen pang through his whole body.

Suddenly the sound of a sandaled foot approaching reached his ears. He trembled violently, fear stifled him, his sight grew dim. Well, it was over, no doubt. He pressed himself into a niche and, half lifeless with terror, waited.

It was a familiar hurrying along. He passed swiftly by, holding in his clenched hand an instrument of torture—a frightful figure—and vanished. The suspense which the rabbi had endured seemed to have suspended the functions of life, and he lay nearly an hour unable to move. Fearing an increase of tortures if he were captured, he thought of returning to his dungeon. But the old hope whispered in his soul that divine *perhaps,* which comforts us in our sorest trials. A miracle had happened. He could doubt no longer. He began to crawl toward the chance of escape. Exhausted by suffering and hunger, trembling with pain, he pressed onward. The sepulchral corridor seemed to lengthen mysteriously, while he, still advancing, gazed into the gloom where there *must* be some avenue of escape.

Oh! oh! He again heard footsteps, but this time they were slower, more heavy. The white and black forms of two inquisitors appeared, emerging from the obscurity beyond. They were conversing in low tones, and seemed to be discussing some important subject, for they were gesticulating vehemently.

At this spectacle Rabbi Aser Abarbanel closed his eyes: his heart beat so violently that it almost suffocated him; his rags were damp with the cold sweat of agony; he lay motionless by the wall, his mouth wide open, under the rays of a lamp, praying to the God of David.

Just opposite to him the two inquisitors paused under the light of the lamp —doubtless owing to some accident due to the course of their argument. One, while listening to his companion, gazed at the rabbi! And, beneath the look—whose absence of expression the hapless man did not at first notice—he fancied he again felt the burning pincers scorch his flesh, he was to be once more a living wound. Fainting, breathless, with fluttering eyelids, he shivered at the touch of the monk's floating robe. But —strange yet natural fact—the inquisitor's gaze was evidently that of a man deeply absorbed in his intended reply, engrossed by what he was hearing; his eyes were fixed—and seemed to look at the Jew *without seeing him.*

In fact, after the lapse of a few minutes, the two gloomy figures slowly pursued their way, still conversing in low tones, toward the place whence the prisoner had come; HE HAD NOT BEEN SEEN! Amid the horrible confusion of the rabbi's thoughts, the idea darted through his brain: "Can I be already dead that they did not see me?" A hideous impression roused him from his

lethargy: in looking at the wall against which his face was pressed, he imagined he beheld two fierce eyes watching! He flung his head back in a sudden frenzy of fright, his hair fairly bristling! Yet, no! No. His hand groped over the stones: it was the *reflection* of the inquisitor's eyes, still retained in his own, which had been refracted from two spots on the wall.

Forward! He must hasten toward that goal which he fancied (absurdly, no doubt) to be deliverance, toward the darkness from which he was now barely thirty paces distant. He pressed forward faster on his knees, his hands, at full length, dragging himself painfully along, and soon entered the dark portion of this terrible corridor.

Suddenly the poor wretch felt a gust of cold air on the hands resting upon the flags; it came from under the little door to which the two walls led.

Oh, Heaven, if that door should open outward. Every nerve in the miserable fugitive's body thrilled with hope. He examined it from top to bottom, though scarcely able to distinguish its outlines in the surrounding darkness. He passed his hand over it: no bolt, no lock! A latch! He started up, the latch yielded to the pressure of his thumb: the door silently swung open before him.

"Halleluiah!" murmured the rabbi in a transport of gratitude as, standing on the threshold, he beheld the scene before him.

The door had opened into the gardens, above which arched a starlit sky, into spring, liberty, life! It revealed the neighboring fields, stretching toward the sierras, whole sinuous blue lines were relieved against the horizon. Yonder lay freedom! O, to escape! He would journey all night through the lemon groves, whose fragrance reached him. Once in the mountains and he was safe! He inhaled the delicious air; the breeze revived him, his lungs expanded! He felt in his swelling heart the *Veni foras* of Lazarus! And to thank once more the God who had bestowed this mercy upon him, he extended his arms, raising his eyes toward Heaven. It was an ecstasy of joy!

Then he fancied he saw the shadow of his arms approach him—fancied that he felt these shadowy arms inclose, embrace him—and that he was pressed tenderly to some one's breast. A tall figure actually did stand directly before him. He lowered his eyes—and remained motionless, gasping for breath, dazed, with fixed eyes, fairly driveling with terror.

Horror! He was in the clasp of the Grand Inquisitor himself, the venerable Pedro Arbuez d'Espila who gazed at him with tearful eyes, like a good shepherd who had found his stray lamb.

The dark-robed priest pressed the hapless Jew to his heart with so fervent an outburst of love, that the edges of the monochal haircloth rubbed the Dominican's breast. And while Aser Abarbanel with protruding eyes gasped in agony in the ascetic's embrace, vaguely comprehending that *all the phases of this fatal evening were only a prearranged torture, that of* HOPE, the Grand Inquisitor, with an accent of touching reproach and a look of consternation, murmured in his ear, his breath parched and burning from long fasting:

"What, my son! On the eve, perchance, of salvation—you wished to leave us?"

Three Geniuses

I SHALL proceed to give an account of three very accomplished geniuses in their way, namely, Carlo Foschino, Girolamo Petrani, and Menico Cedola, belonging to the city of ——. And perhaps, as the scene of action did not lie in a church, and the spoils were but of inconsiderable value, Heaven permitted the rogues to make their escape, otherwise they would have been placed in an awkward predicament, and might have found the grapes they plucked uncommonly sour, and such as would effectually have disgusted them with the fingering art in future.

It happened to be a year of great scarcity, and more especially in the province of O——, insomuch that the villagers died of hunger, while the grain and vines of every kind looked as if they had been ridden over by troops of horse, affording such a prospect as nearly drove the farmers and their landlords distracted. A fine time indeed for those who had nothing to do but eat the fruits of others! So that the owners were compelled to keep watch day and night, though the harvest was hardly worth the pains. More for whim than want, Carlo Foschino agreed with his companions to make an attack on one of the vineyards, celebrated for the sweetness of its grapes, at Santo Martino di ——, which is situated at a short distance from the city, intending not only to eat as much as they liked, but to fill a good basket or two for future use. With this view each of them took his pannier under his arm, and sallying forth about midnight, they arrived at the land of promise, into which they cautiously entered. When once fairly in possession, they proceeded to clear the ground before them in great style, whispering one another at intervals, "How good they are!" "Yes, so sweet! what a flavour! quite exquisite! It is a real paradise for us hapless mortals"; and thus feasting and applauding, they did great execution, sweeping everything before them in order to get at fresh bunches, until they were fairly weary and in danger of suffocation. Then drawing their well-sharpened knives, they began afresh the work of destruction, filling their panniers with all the expedition in their power. They were proceeding merrily through a fine plantation, having finished the better half of their task, but could not avoid making a rustling noise with the branches and scattering a few leaves; and the night being so still that a nest of ants at work would have been heard, this was enough to rouse the jealousy of three armed myrmidons on watch, who, like men of war, were scouring those coasts, to give all freebooters a warm reception with their great rusty blunderbusses and enormous slugs, in any shape but round. Hearing a noise of the crashing of branches, one of the watchmen discharged his piece in that direction, while a sudden rush was made, and a cry set up enough to shake the soul of a hero. "Thieves! thieves! that way! leap the ditch! shoot, kill them! oh, that is good, by San Bellino!" Yet Heaven willed that the shot should miss its aim; and the wily robbers, not forgetting their panniers, started off at the sounds of vengeance they heard,

using their utmost efforts to escape along a narrow path. The night was dark, and they often stumbled over the stalks of the vine or of the Indian-corn growing in the field, though without paying attention to the circumstance, the entangling and tearing and trampling of leaves giving them little chance of escape from their fierce pursuers, whose threatening cries sounded nearer and nearer, till they imagined they felt themselves run through the body. In this extremity Petrani whispered in a soft voice as he continued running, "My friends, let us throw our panniers away, and have a chance for our lives!" to this Cedola replied, hardly able to draw his breath, "You say well, let them go." "No, no," cried Foschino; "take heart, brothers, and leave the matter to me!" So forthwith he began to bellow as loud as he could, "Mercy upon me! that last shot has pierced me through; I am dying, though I did not feel it before; my blood is spouting out like new wine from the barrel!—— Confirm what I say, you blockheads, and make your escape." Then Cedola began to cry, "Mercy, mercy upon us! try to get a little farther; the wound is perhaps not mortal, and we will fetch you a surgeon." "No," replied the wily Foschino, in a dying voice, the better to keep up the cheat, "it is all over with me. Those cruel rascals have murdered a poor Christian for eating a bunch of grapes; yet, by the Holy Virgin, they will have to swing for it, that is some consolation!" And thus saying, they proceeded with flying colours, their panniers heaped up with grapes. For the stupid watchmen, imagining all they heard to be true, began to consider the matter and take more time. "Do you hear what he says?" cried one. "That I do," cried the second. "And you, do you hear?" they added to the third, one of the oldest cut-throats in all Italy. "Let them take it, by all the saints, it is very well; they will obey the seventh commandment in future. I will go nearer, for I daresay they must have left loads of grapes behind them, the wretches!" and they proceeded more cautiously in pursuit. Foschino hearing footsteps stealing along, afraid of discovery, and at the same time of losing the grapes and receiving a good bastinado from the watchmen, resolved, as he felt himself quite wearied out, to go no further. "Leave me here to die, dear friends. I am only grieved that there is no priest at hand to confess me, but Heaven's will be done! Fly, save yourselves! Remember me to my poor wife and children, and perform my last wish!" During this time the foolish watchmen were listening, as he continued to add, "Be witness that I leave my wife all I have, in trust for the benefit of our children after her, in equal portions; be kind to her and to them, and assist them to bring my body away to-morrow, that I may receive Christian burial, and persuade my friends to offer up a few alms and masses for my poor soul. I feel that I am going now, and do you go too!" The rustics hearing these sad words, stopped, and now began to hold a colloquy upon this unlucky case; while Cedola and Petrani set up the most horrid lamentations, wringing their hands and sobbing as if their hearts would break. "Nay, do not give way to despair. A plague upon the watchmen! they will hang for it; and upon the grapes! we may in-

deed call them sour. Well, we have the comfort to think that the watchmen will be hanged if you die; they were only to take us into custody, not to take our lives. There never was such a piece of barbarity, such a wilful murder, since the world began. See how he bleeds, poor fellow! he will not live long. Come, let them even kill us all, since they have killed our best friend, a gentleman who only joined us for a frolic. Let the wretches dip their hands in the blood of us all; but we are men of quality, and they shall smart for it." Upon hearing these words and cries so boldly uttered, the guards concluded it to be a serious affair, and being really afraid that they had killed the gentleman, began to think of running in their turn. But when they next heard him say, in a feeble and lamentable voice, *"In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum,"* they could no longer control their freight, but took to their heels, just as they heard the others utter, "He is dead, he is gone for ever; cold, cold, my friend!" and a fresh ululation was set up, which added wings to the flight of the watchmen. This done, they departed at their leisure, the dead man leading the way with the panniers. When the watch ventured to stop, one of them said, "Who shot him, think you? It was not I, I am sure." "Nor I." "Nor I." "Well, but," said another, "you agreed that I should fire." "True, but you should have shot over his head and not through his body." "Well," replied the man, "I thought I did shoot high up into the air. I wonder how it could have killed him;" and thus, each speaking in his own defence, full of fear and trembling, they returned home, but were unable to sleep a wink that night; while the three knaves, having recovered from their terror, were enjoying themselves comfortably over their panniers of grapes. In the morning the thieves gave an account of their adventure, which threw their auditors into such fits of laughter that some have not ceased even to this day. As for the poor rustics, although they never found the corpse, or had any charge brought against them, they yet continued uneasy and suspicious, having the fear of the gallows perpetually before their eyes, and not having courage to make any inquiries into the affair, lest they should betray themselves, and raise suspicions that they had been guilty of so wicked a homicide.

My Strange Adventure

I WAS not always successful among the Turks. I had the misfortune to be overpowered by numbers, to be made prisoner of war; and, what is worse, but always usual among the Turks, to be sold for a slave. In that state of humiliation my daily task was not very hard and laborious, but rather singular and irksome. It was to drive the Sultan's bees every morning to their pasture-grounds, to attend them all the day long, and again at night to drive

them back to their hives. One evening I missed a bee, and soon observed that two bears had fallen upon her to tear her to pieces for the honey she carried. I had nothing like an offensive weapon in my hands but the silver hatchet, which is the badge of the Sultan's gardeners and farmers. I threw it at the robbers, with an intention to frighten them away, and set the poor bee at liberty; but, by an unlucky turn of my arm, it flew upward, and continued rising till it reached the moon. How should I recover it? how fetch it down again? I recollected that Turkey beans grew very quickly, and ran up to an astonishing height. I planted one immediately; it grew, and actually fastened itself to one of the moon's horns. I had no more to do now but to climb up by it into the moon, where I safely arrived, and had a troublesome piece of business before I could find my silver hatchet in a place where everything has the brightness of silver: at last, however, I found it in a heap of chaff and chopped straw. I was now for returning, but, alas! the heat of the sun had dried up my bean; it was totally useless for my descent: so I fell to work, and twisted me a rope of that chopped straw, as long and as well as I could make it. This I fastened to one of the moon's horns and slid down to the end of it. Here I held myself fast with the left hand, and with the hatchet in my right, I cut the long, now useless, end of the upper part, which, when tied to the lower end, brought me a good deal lower: this repeated splicing and tying of the rope did not improve its quality, or bring me down to the Sultan's farm. I was four or five miles from the earth at least when it broke; I fell to the ground with such amazing violence, that I found myself stunned, and in a hole nine fathoms deep at least, made by the weight of my body falling from so great a height: I recovered but knew not how to get out again; however, I dug slopes or steps with my finger-nails (then of forty years' growth), and easily accomplished it.

Peace was soon after concluded with the Turks, and, gaining my liberty, I left St. Petersburg, at the time of that singular revolution, when the Emperor in his cradle, his mother, the Duke of Brunswick, her father, Field Marshal Munich, and many others were sent to Siberia. The winter was then so uncommonly severe all over Europe that ever since the sun seems to be frost-bitten. At my return to this place I felt on the road greater inconveniences than those I had experienced on my setting out.

I traveled post, and, finding myself in a narrow lane, bid the postilion give a signal with his horn, that the other travellers might not meet us in the narrow passage. He blew with all his might; but his endeavors were in vain; he could not make the horn sound, which was unaccountable, and rather unfortunate, for soon after we found ourselves in the presence of another coach coming the other way; there was no proceeding; however, I got out of my carriage, and being pretty strong, placed it, wheels and all, upon my head: I then jumped over a hedge about nine feet high (which, considering the weight of the coach, was rather difficult) into a field, and came out again by another jump into the road

beyond the other carriage. I then went back for the horses, and placing one upon my head, and the other under my left arm, by the same means brought them to my coach, put to, and proceeded to an inn at the end of our stage. I should have told you that the horse under my arm was very spirited and not above four years old; in making my second spring over the hedge, he expressed great dislike to that violent kind of motion by kicking and snorting; however, I confined his hind legs by putting them into my coat-pocket. After we arrived at the inn, my postilion and I refreshed ourselves: he hung his hat on a peg near the kitchen fire; I sat on the other side. Suddenly we heard a *tereng! tereng! teng! teng!* We looked round, and now found the reason why the postilion had not been able to sound his horn; his tunes were frozen up in the horn, and came out now by thawing, plain enough, and much to the credit of the driver; so that the honest fellow entertained us for some time with a variety of tunes, without putting his mouth to the horn—*The King of Prussia's March—Over the Hill and Over the Dale*—with many other favorite tunes. At length the thawing entertainment concluded, as I shall this short account of my Russian travels.

The Gray Champion

THERE was once a time when New England groaned under the actual pressure of heavier wrongs than those threatened ones which brought on the Revolution. James II, the bigoted successor of Charles the Voluptuous, had annulled the charters of all the colonies, and sent a harsh and unprincipled soldier to take away our liberties and endanger our religion. The Administration of Sir Edmund Andros lacked scarcely a single characteristic of tyranny: a Governor and Council, holding office from the King, and wholly independent of the country; laws made and taxes levied without concurrence of the people, immediate or by their representatives; the rights of private citizens violated, and the titles of all landed property declared void; the voice of complaint stifled by restrictions on the press; and, finally, disaffection overawed by the first band of mercenary troops that ever marched on our free soil. For two years our ancestors were kept in sullen submission, by that filial love which had invariably secured their allegiance to the mother country, whether its head chanced to be a Parliament, Protector, or Popish Monarch. Till these evil times, however, such allegiance had been merely nominal, and the colonists had ruled themselves, enjoying far more freedom than is even yet the privilege of the native subjects of Great Britain.

At length a rumor reached our shores that the Prince of Orange had ventured on an enterprise, the success of which would be the triumph of civil and religious rights and the salvation of New England. It was but a doubtful whisper; it might be false, or the attempt might fail; and, in either case, the man

that stirred against King James would lose his head. Still the intelligence produced a marked effect. The people smiled mysteriously in the streets, and threw bold glances at their oppressors; while, far and wide, there was a subdued and silent agitation, as if the slightest signal would rouse the whole land from its sluggish despondency. Aware of their danger, the rulers resolved to avert it by an imposing display of strength, and perhaps to confirm their despotism by yet harsher measures. One afternoon in April, 1689, Sir Edmund Andros and his favorite councillors, being warm with wine, assembled the redcoats of the Governor's Guard, and made their appearance in the streets of Boston. The sun was near setting when the march commenced.

The roll of the drum, at that unquiet crisis, seemed to go through the streets, less as the martial music of the soldiers, than as a muster call to the inhabitants themselves. A multitude, by various avenues, assembled in King Street, which was destined to be the scene, nearly a century afterwards, of another encounter between the troops of Britain, and a people struggling against her tyranny. Though more than sixty years had elapsed, since the Pilgrims came, this crowd of their descendants still showed the strong and sombre features of their character, perhaps more strikingly in such a stern emergency than on happier occasions. There were the sober garb, the general severity of mien, the gloomy but undismayed expression, the scriptural forms of speech, and the confidence in Heaven's blessing on a righteous cause, which would have marked a band of the original Puritans, when threatened by some peril of the wilderness. Indeed, it was not yet time for the old spirit to be extinct; since there were men in the street, that day, who had worshipped there beneath the trees, before a house was reared to the God for whom they had become exiles. Old soldiers of the Parliament were here, too, smiling grimly at the thought, that their aged arms might strike another blow against the house of Stuart. Here, also, were the veterans of King Philip's war, who had burned villages and slaughtered young and old, with pious fierceness, while the godly souls throughout the land were helping them with prayer. Several ministers were scattered among the crowd which, unlike all other mobs, regarded them with such reverence, as if there were sanctity in their very garments. These holy men exerted their influence to quiet the people, but not to disperse them. Meantime, the purpose of the Governor, in disturbing the peace of the town, at a period when the slightest commotion might throw the country into a ferment, was almost the universal subject of inquiry, and variously explained.

"Satan will strike his master-stroke presently," cried some, "because he knoweth that his time is short. All our godly pastors are to be dragged to prison! We shall see them at a Smithfield fire in King Street!"

Hereupon the people of each parish gathered closer round their minister, who looked calmly upwards and assumed a more apostolic dignity, as well befitted a candidate for the highest honor of his profession, the crown of martyrdom. It was actually fancied, at that period, that New England might

have a John Rogers of her own, to take the place of that worthy in the Primer.

"The Pope of Rome has given orders for a new St. Bartholomew!" cried others. "We are to be massacred, man and male child!"

Neither was this rumor wholly discredited, although the wiser class believed the Governor's object somewhat less atrocious. His predecessor under the old charter, Bradstreet, a venerable companion of the first settlers, was known to be in town. There were grounds for conjecturing, that Sir Edmund Andros intended, at once, to strike terror, by a parade of military force, and to confound the opposite faction, by possessing himself of their chief.

"Stand firm for the old charter Governor!" shouted the crowd, seizing upon the idea. "The good old Governor Bradstreet!"

While this cry was at the loudest, the people were surprised by the well-known figure of Governor Bradstreet himself, a patriarch of nearly ninety, who appeared on the elevated steps of a door, and, with characteristic mildness, besought them to submit to the constituted authorities.

"My children," concluded this venerable person, "do nothing rashly. Cry not aloud, but pray for the welfare of New England, and expect patiently what the Lord will do in this matter!"

The event was soon to be decided. All this time, the roll of the drum had been approaching through Cornhill, louder and deeper, till with reverberations from house to house, and the regular tramp of martial footsteps, it burst into the street. A double rank of soldiers made their appearance, occupying the whole breadth of the passage, with shouldered matchlocks, and matches burning, so as to present a row of fires in the dusk. Their steady march was like the progress of a machine, that would roll irresistibly over everything in its way. Next, moving slowly, with a confused clatter of hoofs on the pavement, rode a party of mounted gentlemen, the central figure being Sir Edmund Andros, elderly, but erect and soldier-like. Those around him were his favorite councillors, and the bitterest foes of New England. At his right hand rode Edward Randolph, our arch-enemy, that "blasted wretch," as Cotton Mather calls him, who achieved the downfall of our ancient government, and was followed with a sensible curse, through life and to his grave. On the other side was Bullivant, scattering jests and mockery as he rode along. Dudley came behind, with a down-cast look, dreading, as well he might, to meet the indignant gaze of the people, who beheld him, their only countryman by birth, among the oppressors of his native land. The captain of a frigate in the harbor, and two or three civil officers under the Crown, were also there. But the figure which most attracted the public eye, and stirred up the deepest feeling, was the Episcopal clergyman of King's Chapel, riding haughtily among the magistrates in his priestly vestments, the fitting representative of prelacy and persecution, the union of church and state, and all those abominations which had driven the Puritans to the wilderness. Another guard of soldiers, in double rank, brought up the rear.

The whole scene was a picture of the condition of New England, and its moral, the deformity of any govern-

ment that does not grow out of the nature of things and the character of the people. On one side the religious multitude, with their sad visages and dark attire, and on the other, the group of despotic rulers, with the high churchman in the midst, and here and there a crucifix at their bosoms, all magnificently clad, flushed with wine, proud of unjust authority, and scoffing at the universal groan. And the mercenary soldiers, waiting but the word to deluge the street with blood, showed the only means by which obedience could be secured.

"O Lord of Hosts," cried a voice among the crowd, "provide a Champion for thy people!"

This ejaculation was loudly uttered, and served as a herald's cry, to introduce a remarkable personage. The crowd had rolled back, and were now huddled together nearly at the extremity of the street, while the soldiers had advanced no more than a third of its length. The intervening space was empty,—a paved solitude, between lofty edifices, which threw almost a twilight shadow over it. Suddenly, there was seen the figure of an ancient man, who seemed to have emerged from among the people, and was walking by himself along the centre of the street, to confront the armed band. He wore the old Puritan dress, a dark cloak and a steeple-crowned hat, in the fashion of at least fifty years before, with a heavy sword upon his thigh, but a staff in his hand to assist the tremulous gait of age.

When at some distance from the multitude, the old man turned slowly round, displaying a face of antique majesty, rendered doubly venerable by the hoary beard that descended on his breast. He made a gesture at once of encouragement and warning, then turned again, and resumed his way.

"Who is this gray patriarch?" asked the young men of their sires.

"Who is this venerable brother?" asked the old men among themselves.

But none could make reply. The fathers of the people, those of fourscore years and upwards, were disturbed, deeming it strange that they should forget one of such evident authority, whom they must have known in their early days, the associate of Winthrop, and all the old councillors, giving laws, and making prayers, and leading them against the savage. The elderly men ought to have remembered him, too, with locks as gray in their youth, as their own were now. And the young! How could he have passed so utterly from their memories,—that hoary sire, the relic of long-departed times, whose awful benediction had surely been bestowed on their uncovered heads, in childhood?

"Whence did he come? What is his purpose? Who can this old man be?" whispered the wondering crowd.

Meanwhile, the venerable stranger, staff in hand, was pursuing his solitary walk along the centre of the street. As he drew near the advancing soldiers, and as the roll of their drum came full upon his ear, the old man raised himself to a loftier mien, while the decrepitude of age seemed to fall from his shoulders, leaving him in gray but unbroken dignity. Now, he marched onward with a warrior's step, keeping time to the military music. Thus the aged form advanced on one side, and the whole parade of soldiers and magistrates on the other till, when scarcely twenty yards remained between, the old

man grasped his staff by the middle, and held it before him like a leader's truncheon.

"Stand!" cried he.

The eye, the face, and attitude of command; the solemn, yet warlike peal of that voice, fit either to rule a host in the battle-field or be raised to God in prayer, were irresistible. At the old man's word and outstretched arm, the roll of the drum was hushed at once, and the advancing line stood still. A tremulous enthusiasm seized upon the multitude. That stately form, combining the leader and the saint, so gray, so dimly seen, in such an ancient garb, could only belong to some old champion of the righteous cause, whom the oppressor's drum had summoned from his grave. They raised a shout of awe and exultation, and looked for the deliverance of New England.

The Governor, and the gentlemen of his party, perceiving themselves brought to an unexpected stand, rode hastily forward, as if they would have pressed their snorting and affrighted horses right against the hoary apparition. He, however, blenched not a step, but glancing his severe eye round the group, which half encompassed him, at last bent it sternly on Sir Edmund Andros. One would have thought that the dark old man was chief ruler there, and that the Governor and Council, with soldiers at their back, representing the whole power and authority of the Crown, had no alternative but obedience.

"What does this old fellow here?" cried Edward Randolph, fiercely. "On, Sir Edmund! Bid the soldiers forward, and give the dotard the same choice that you give all his countrymen,—to stand aside or be trampled on!"

"Nay, nay, let us show respect to the good grandsire," said Bullivant, laughing. "See you not, he is some old round-headed dignitary, who hath lain asleep these thirty years, and knows nothing of the change of times? Doubtless, he thinks to put us down with a proclamation in Old Noll's name!"

"Are you mad, old man?" demanded Sir Edmund Andros, in loud and harsh tones. "How dare you stay the march of King James's Governor?"

"I have stayed the march of a King himself, ere now," replied the gray figure, with stern composure. "I am here, Sir Governor, because the cry of an oppressed people hath disturbed me in my secret place; and beseeching this favor earnestly of the Lord, it was vouchsafed me to appear once again on earth, in the good old cause of his saints. And what speak ye of James? There is no longer a Popish tyrant on the throne of England, and by to-morrow noon, his name shall be a byword in this very street, where ye would make it a word of terror. Back, thou that wast a Governor, back! With this night thy power is ended,—to-morrow, the prison!—back, lest I foretell the scaffold!"

The people had been drawing nearer and nearer, and drinking in the words of their champion, who spoke in accents long disused, like one unaccustomed to converse, except with the dead of many years ago. But his voice stirred their souls. They confronted the soldiers, not wholly without arms, and ready to convert the very stones of the street into deadly weapons. Sir Edmund Andros looked at the old man; then he cast his hard and cruel eye over the multitude, and beheld them burning

with that lurid wrath, so difficult to kindle or to quench; and again he fixed his gaze on the aged form, which stood obscurely in an open space, where neither friend nor foe had thrust himself. What were his thoughts, he uttered no word which might discover. But whether the oppressor were overawed by the Gray Champion's look, or perceived his peril in the threatening attitude of the people, it is certain that he gave back, and ordered his soldiers to commence a slow and guarded retreat. Before another sunset, the Governor, and all that rode so proudly with him, were prisoners, and long ere it was known that James had abdicated, King William was proclaimed throughout New England.

But where was the Gray Champion? Some reported that, when the troops had gone from King Street, and the people were thronging tumultuously in their rear, Bradstreet, the aged Governor, was seen to embrace a form more aged than his own. Others soberly affirmed, that while they marvelled at the venerable grandeur of his aspect, the old man had faded from their eyes, melting slowly into the hues of twilight, till, where he stood, there was an empty space. But all agreed that the hoary shape was gone. The men of that generation watched for his reappearance, in sunshine and in twilight, but never saw him more, nor knew when his funeral passed, nor where his gravestone was.

And who was the Gray Champion? Perhaps his name might be found in the records of that stern Court of Justice which passed a sentence, too mighty for the age, but glorious in all after times for its humbling lesson to the monarch and its high example to the subject. I have heard that, whenever the descendants of the Puritans are to show the spirit of their sires, the old man appears again. When eighty years had passed, he walked once more in King Street. Five years later, in the twilight of an April morning, he stood on the green, beside the meeting-house, at Lexington, where now the obelisk of granite, with a slab of slate inlaid, commemorates the first fallen of the Revolution. And when our fathers were toiling at the breastwork on Bunker's Hill, all through that night the old warrior walked his rounds. Long, long may it be, ere he comes again! His hour is one of darkness and adversity and peril. But should domestic tyranny oppress us, or the invader's step pollute our soil, still may the Gray Champion come; for he is the type of New England's hereditary spirit; and his shadowy march, on the eve of danger, must ever be the pledge that New England's sons will vindicate their ancestry.

Adventure in the Other World

WELL—said Socrates—I will tell you a tale; not one of those tales which Odysseus tells to the hero Alcinous; yet, this, too, is a tale of a brave man, Er, the son of Armenius, a Pamphylian by birth. He was slain in battle, and ten days afterward, when the bodies of the dead were taken up, already in a state of corruption, his body was unaffected by decay, and carried home to

be buried. And on the twelfth day, as he was lying on the funeral pile, he returned to life, and told them what he had seen in the other world.

He said that when he left the body his soul went on a journey with a great company, and that they came to a mysterious place at which there were two chasms in the earth; they were near together, and over against them were two other chasms in the heaven above. In the intermediate space there were judges seated, who bade the just, after they had judged them, ascend by the heavenly way on the right hand, having the signs of the judgment bound on their foreheads. And in like manner the unjust were commanded by them to descend by the lower way on the left hand; these also had the symbols of their deeds fastened on their backs. He drew near, and they told him that he was to be the messenger who would carry the report of the other world to men; and they bade him hear and see all that was to be heard and seen in that place.

Then he beheld and saw on one side the souls departing at either chasm of heaven and earth when sentence had been given them; and at the two other openings other souls, some ascending out of the earth dusty and worn with travel, some descending out of heaven clean and bright. And always on their arrival they seemed as if they had come from a long journey; and they went out into the meadow with joy, and encamped as at a festival; and those who knew one another embraced and conversed, the souls which came from the earth curiously inquiring about the things above, and the souls which came from Heaven about the things beneath. And they told one another of what had happened by the way—those from below weeping and sorrowing at the remembrance of the things which they had endured and seen in their journey (now the journey had lasted a thousand years), while those from above were describing heavenly delights and visions of inconceivable beauty.

There is not time to tell all, but the sum is this:—

He said that for every wrong which they had done to anyone they suffered tenfold; that is to say, once in every hundred years—the thousand years answering to the hundred years which are reckoned as the life of man. If, for example, there were any who had been the cause of many deaths, or had betrayed or enslaved cities or armies, or been guilty of any other evil behavior, for each and all of these they received punishment ten times over; and the rewards of beneficence and justice and holiness were in the same proportion. I need hardly repeat what he said concerning young children dying almost as soon as they were born. Of piety and impiety to gods and parents, and of murders, there were retributions other and greater far, which he described.

He mentioned that he was present when one of the spirits asked another, "Where is Aridæsus the Great?" (Now this Aridæsus lived a thousand years before the time of Er. He had been the tyrant of some city of Pamphylia, and had murdered his aged father and his elder brother, and was said to have committed many other abominable crimes.) The answer was, "He comes not hither, and never will come. For

this was one of the miserable sights witnessed by us: We were approaching the mouth of the cave, and, having seen all, were about to reascend, when of a sudden Aridæsus appeared, and several others, most of whom were tyrants; and there were also, besides the tyrants, private individuals who had been great criminals. They were just at the mouth, being, as they fancied, about to return into the upper world; but the opening, instead of receiving them, gave forth a sound when any of these incurable or unpunished sinners tried to ascend; and then wild men of fiery aspect, who were standing by, and knew what that meant, seized and carried off several of them; and Aridæsus and others they bound head and hand, and threw them down, and flayed them with scourges, and dragged them along the road at the side, carding them on thorns like wool, and declaring to the passers-by what were their crimes, and that they were being taken away to be cast into hell." And of the many terrors which they had endured, he said that there was none like the terror which each of them felt at that moment lest they should hear the Voice; and when there was silence, one by one they ascended with joy. "These," said Er, "were the penalties and retributions, and there were rewards as great."

Now when the spirits which were in the meadow had tarried seven days, on the eighth day they were obliged to proceed on their journey; and on the fourth day after, he said that they came to a place where they could see a line of light, like a column let down from above, extending right through the whole heaven and through the earth, in coloring resembling a rainbow, only brighter and purer. Another day's journey brought them to the place; and there, in the midst of the light they saw reaching from Heaven to the ends by which it was fastened. For this light is the belt of Heaven, and holds together the circle of the universe, like the undergirders of a trireme. From these ends is extended the spindle of Necessity, on which all the revolutions turn. . . .

The spindle turns on the knees of Necessity: and on the upper surface of the eight circles, the orbits of the fixed stars and the planets is a Siren who goes round with them, hymning a single sound and note. The eight together form one harmony. And round about at equal intervals, there is another band, three in number, each sitting upon her throne. These are the Fates, daughters of Necessity, who are clothed in white raiment, and have crowns of wool upon their heads—Lachesis and Clotho and Atropos—who accompany with their voices the harmonies of the sirens; Lachesis singing of the Past, Clotho of the Present, and Atropos of the Future; Clotho now and then assisting with a touch of her right hand the motion of the outer circle or whole of the spindle, and Atropos with her left hand touching the inner ones, and Lachesis laying hold of either in turn, first with one hand and then with the other.

When Er and the spirits arrived, their duty was to go at once to Lachesis. But first of all there came a Prophet who arranged them in order. Then he took from the knees of Lachesis lots and samples of life, and going up to a high place, spake as follows: "Hear the words of Lachesis, the

daughter of Necessity. Mortal souls, behold a new cycle of mortal life. Your Genius will not choose you, but you will choose your Genius; and let him who draws the first lot first choose a life, which shall be his destiny. Virtue is free; and as a man honors or dishonors her he will have more or less of her; the chooser is answerable —God is justified."

When the Interpreter had thus spoken, he scattered lots among them, and each one took up the lot which fell near him—all but Er himself (he was not allowed)—and each, as he took his lot, perceived the number which he had obtained. Then the Interpreter placed on the ground before them the samples of lives; and there were many more lives than the souls present; and there were all sorts of lives—of every animal and of man in every condition.

And there were tyrannies among them, some continuing while the tyrant lived, others which broke off in the middle, and came to an end in poverty and exile and beggary. And there were lives of famous men; some who were famous for their form and beauty, as well as for their strength and success in games; or, again, for their birth and the qualities of their ancestors; and some who were the reverse of famous for the opposite qualities; and of women likewise. There was not, however, any definite character in them, because the soul must of necessity be changed according to the life chosen. But there was every other quality; and they all mingled with one another, and also with elements of wealth and poverty, and disease and health. And there were mean estates also.

And here—said Socrates—is the supreme peril of our human state; and therefore the utmost care should be taken. Let each one of us leave every other kind of knowledge, and seek and follow one thing only, if peradventure he may find someone who will make him able to learn and discern between good and evil, and so to choose always and everywhere the better life as he has opportunity. . . . For we have seen and know that this is the best choice both in life and after death. A man must take with him into the world below an adamantine faith in Truth and Right, that there, too, he may be undazzled by the desire of wealth or the other allurements of evil, lest, coming upon tyrannies and similar villanies, he do irremediable wrongs to others and suffer yet worse himself. But let him know how to choose the mean, and avoid the extremes on either side, as far as possible, not only in this life, but in all that is to come. For this is the way to happiness.

And, according to the report of the messenger, this is exactly what the Prophet said at the time: "Even for the last comer, if he choose wisely, and will live diligently, there is appointed a happy and not undesirable existence. Let not him who chooses first be careless, and let not the last despair."

And while the Interpreter was speaking, he who had the first choice came forward, and in a moment chose the greatest tyranny. His mind having been darkened by folly and sensuality, he had not thought out the whole matter, and did not see at first that he was fated, among other evils, to devour his own children. But when he had time to reflect, and saw what was in the lot, he began to beat his breast

and lament over his choice, not abiding by the proclamation of the Prophet; for instead of throwing the blame of his misfortune upon himself, he accused Chance and the Gods, and everything rather than himself.

Most curious, said the messenger, was the spectacle of the election—sad and laughable and strange; the souls generally choosing with a reference to their experience of a previous life. There he saw the soul which had been Orpheus choosing the life of a swan, out of enmity to the race of women, hating to be born of a woman, because they had been his murderers; he saw also the soul of Themyras choosing the life of a nightingale; birds, on the other hand, like the swan and other musicians, choosing to be men.

The soul which obtained the twentieth lot chose the life of a lion; and this was Ajax, the son of Telamon, who would not be a man—remembering the injustice which was done him in the judgment of the arms. The next was Agamemnon, whose chose the life of an eagle, because, like Ajax, he hated human nature on account of his sufferings. About the middle was the lot of Atalanta; she, seeing the great fame of an athlete, was unable to resist the temptation. After her came the soul of Epeus, the son of Panopeus, passing into the nature of a woman cunning in the arts. And, far away among the last who chose, the soul of the jester Thersites was putting on the form of a monkey.

There came also the soul of Odysseus, having yet to make a choice, and his lot happened to be the last of them all. Now the recollection of his former toils had disenchanted him of ambition, and he went about for considerable time in search of a private man who had no cares. He had some difficulty in finding this, which was lying about and had been neglected by everybody else; and when he saw it he said he would have done the same had he been first instead of last, and that he was delighted at his choice.

And not only did men pass into animals, but I must also mention that there were animals, tame and wild, who changed into one another, and into corresponding human natures—the good into gentle, and the evil into savage, in all sorts of combinations.

All the souls had now chosen their lives, and they went in the order of their choice to Lachesis, who sent with them the Genius whom they had severally chosen to be the guardian of their lives and the fulfiller of the choice. This Genius led the soul first to Clotho, who drew them within the revolution of the spindle impelled by her hand, thus ratifying the choice; and then, when they were fastened to this, carried them away to Atropos, who spun the threads and made them irreversible. Then, without turning round, they passed beneath the throne of Necessity. And when they had all passed, they marched on in a scorching heat to the plain of Forgetfulness, which was a barren waste destitute of trees and verdure; and then toward evening they encamped by the river of Unmindfulness, the water of which no vessel can hold. Of this they were all obliged to drink a certain quantity, and those who were not saved by wisdom drank more than was necessary; and each one, as he drank, forgot all things. Now after they had gone to

rest, about the middle of the night, there was a thunder-storm and earthquake; and then in an instant they were driven all manner of ways, like stars shooting upward to their birth. Er himself was hindered from drinking the water. But in what manner or by what means he returned to the body he could not say; only in the morning, awakening suddenly, he saw himself on the pyre.

And thus—says Socrates in conclusion—the tale has been saved, and has not perished, and will save us, if we are obedient to the word spoken; and we shall pass safely over the river of Forgetfulness, and our soul will not be defiled.

Furnace of the Gale

It was a stormy night. The wind was blowing a gale; not a star was visible. The wind came from the southeast; raw, and damp with a briny dampness. The force of a thousand leagues of unimpeded violence was in it; it was full of lusty strength, of unchecked might, rageful and fierce. The centre of the storm movement was in the far Atlantic; but, as it swept round on its invisible axis in fearful revolutions, Long Island split the periphery of its power like a wedge, and sheared off a mighty column, which poured itself into and down the Sound, sweeping it from end to end. The waves ran high; they rose out of the darkness, vast volumes of on-rolling water, and rushed against the steamer's prow as if they would keel her over and drive her downward to destruction.

Only a few of her full complement of passengers were on deck. Some were in the main saloon, gathered in knots for comfort. Others sat moodily apart, communing with their fears; while not a few were in their staterooms, or down below in their berths, sick and thoroughly frightened. The air was full of foreboding. The prevalent feeling was that of alarm. The plunge of the vessel as she dived downward into the hollow of the sea; the tremulous shocks that shook her from stem to stern; the quivering that convulsed her huge frame, and tried her timbers in all their joints as the great sea struck her; the groaning of the machinery, and now and then the rush of waters overhead as some sea swept over her bulwarks—revealed to those that were within the saloon, or lay stretched in their berths, that the gale was at its height.

A few of the passengers were on deck; some were sailors, and from habit kept an exposed position; others, while not seamen, were sufficiently familiar with voyaging, and of such a temperament, that a position on deck and the sight of a storm were more congenial to them than the protected parlors. Among these our friends could be numbered. It was not in accordance with the temperament or habits of Herbert and the Trapper to stay between decks when such a storm was raging, and the lad could not remain

separate from his companions. Indeed, his behavior and remarks revealed the fact that he was familiar with the different portions of the vessel, and with the proper management of such a craft in a storm. He evidently had knowledge of the machinery, knew the name and use of all the equipments, and showed no inconsiderable acquaintance with the force and action of wind and waves, and even with the reefs and islands of the coast along which the course of the vessel was now directed.

"I don't know what we should do if anything should happen," said Herbert; "the clerk told me there were six hundred passengers aboard, and at the tables tonight I thought I had never seen so many women and children in one boat at a time. I don't know what would become of them, or any of us for that matter, in a sea like this if——"

Fire! FIRE! F-I-R-E!

The effect of such a cry on shipboard at night in the midst of such a gale, on a crowded steamer, can never be known to those who have not heard it; nor communicated to those who quietly sit in safety and at ease, reading its description on the printed page. In the great saloon, when the awful sound swept through it, men engaged in conversation stopped—looked with startled interrogation into each other's eyes, with faces that on the instant turned white as ashes. Women with a sudden gesture placed their hands above their hearts as if they had received a sudden stab. Some continued sitting as they had been, as if stiffened to the position. Others, with their hands still on their hearts, sank back in a dead swoon. Children stopped their play and stood staring at their elders. The sick in their berths stilled their groans and lay straight on their cots as if dead, listening with pent breath.

On deck all was hurry and confusion incident to such an emergency. Hose were being fitted, pumps got in motion, the crew was being told off into companies, and the proper officers put over them. The captain was a brave man, and skillful; the officers supported him nobly, and most of the crew obeyed the voices of discipline. The places of those who faltered were more than made good by volunteers, amid whom the Trapper and the Lad were efficiently prominent. Brave men and braver women were among the passengers, who exerted themselves to still the tumult. The captain himself went into the main saloon on his way to the engineer's room, and addressed the passengers in brave and hopeful words. He said they were in danger—that he did not deny—but that he had been in great danger before, and came out all right; the ship was on fire, he admitted; but he stated that the pumps were working well, and if they could not subdue the flames, he hoped to keep them under until he could make harbor.

The captain passed on and entered the engineer's room; counselled a moment with the chief, and then, with three carpenters, began to explore the forward hold of the vessel, to find the location and the extent of the fire. It took but a brief search to discover that

the whole forward part of the ship beneath was a mass of flames. The freight was of combustible material, and thoroughly ignited. The captain looked at the dreadful spectacle for an instant, while the lines of his face grew absolutely rigid, and said:

"My God! The ship is a furnace!"

He stood another instant in profound thought, during which his quick and fearless mind had considered all the contingencies, and without speaking to the three men that were with him, he started for the deck and pilot-house. He summoned the chief engineer and his officers around him, and stated what he had discovered—laid the whole subject in a few terse words before them and said:

"Gentlemen, in twenty minutes the saloons will be like an oven, and the windows of the pilot-house will be cracking. Have you anything to suggest?"

The first officer, a sailor from boyhood, whose head and beard were a heavy gray, said promptly:

"Captain, we must beach her."

The officers looked their assent.

"It is our only course," said the captain. "Pilot," said he, turning to the man, "can you beach her?" The other deliberated a moment, and said:

"Captain, I am ready to take any responsibility that a man in my position should take. I am ready to execute any order you give; but I will not take the responsibility of running this steamer, with six hundred passengers aboard on to a coast that I know nothing of, beyond the knowledge I have of the lights, the reefs, and the harbors. It would be a mere chance if I got her within half a mile of the shore."

Not a man spoke. They felt as if the horror of death were shutting down around them. They were brave, they were calm. They showed no sign of fear. They could meet death as men should meet it; but they could not tell how to escape it. Suddenly the captain's face lighted, with the light which was the expectation of a hope, of a conjecture, of a possibility. He darted out of the pilot-house, swung himself down among the crew, who were busy with the pumps and the hose, and, with a concentration of voice that penetrated the roar of the storm like a knife, shouted:

"Is there a man here who knows this coast?"

When the captain dropped among them the men stopped their work and stood staring at him. Only the old Trapper and Herbert, each of whom stood above the forward hatch, hose in hand, directing the streams that the pumps sent through the swelling tubes downward, kept their position. The captain waited a moment, while the light faded from his countenance as no response came, and then as if in despair, he shouted:

"I say, is there a man here who knows this coast? For God's sake, some of you speak!"

Again, no reply came, and he was on the point of turning away, when the Lad, who had been kneeling under the protection of the bulwark trying to stop a rent which the pressure had made in the hose that the old Trapper was tending, rose out of the shadow and approaching the captain, said:

"Yes, sir, I know the coast."

"Who are you," said the captain, incredulously, "that claim such knowledge? Are you not the youth I saw with the old hunter at the table to-night? How should you, born in the interior, know about this coast?"

"I was not born in the woods," responded the Lad. "I was born within ten miles of where we are, and I know every rock and reef and point, for I have fished on them all; and I know every beach, for I used to play on them when a boy."

Lightning is scarce quicker than was the motion of Herbert, as he darted forward into the smoke, which was rolling up in great volumes from the front part of the boat.

By this time the forward half of the vessel was almost one sheet of flame. A column of fire rose out of the forward hatch fifty feet into the air, but was mercifully blown onward by the flame. From this the Trapper and the Lad were at least safe, but the flames were now breaking over all restraint. The deck itself was being burnt through, and sections were falling into the hold. The stanchions and timbers of the bulwarks were already in full blaze. The outer edges of the upper deck were girdled with fire. The roof of the pilot-house had begun to kindle. The flames were already eating their way toward the stern, and would soon be in the rear of the two men who were standing half hidden in smoke at a point which would soon be the very centre of the conflagration. But they never flinched. They stood in the exact position where they were when Henry left them; the Trapper still holding the trumpet in his hand, and the Lad still gazing steadfastly ahead.

"Tell them to port two points," said the Lad, quietly.

The old man placed the trumpet to his lips, and through the brazen tube his voice poured steady and strong:

"The boy says: 'Tell 'em to port two p'ints.' "

The vessel swayed suddenly to port; and as she leapt away, the Lad said:

"Tell them to hold her steady as she is."

Again the old man lifted his trumpet, and called:

"The boy says, 'Tell 'em to hold her steady as she is.' "

For a minute not a word was spoken. The steamer tore on through the gloom, lighting her path with the flames. The roof of the pilot-house dropped in, and the smoke and cinders hid the two men from the sight of those who, with prayers on their lips and with agonized faces, were gazing at them from behind.

Suddenly out of the smoke and fire came the tones of the trumpet:

"The lad says, *'Tell 'em I hear the surf on the beach.'* "

Suddenly the starboard half of the upper deck fell with a crash. As it fell those behind saw the lad turn to the Trapper—saw him totter—saw him steady himself—saw his companion catch him by the arm—saw the old hero, with the sleeve of his coat, that was itself smoking, wipe the cinders from his lips as he lifted the trumpet to his mouth; and out of the black, eddying smoke, as it swept over the

three and hid them from sight, bellowed the words, strong as trumpet could send them:—

"The lad says:—*'Tell 'em I see the surf on the beach! Hold her steady as she is.' God*——"

The sentence was never completed. The flat-bottom of the vessel touched the sand—slid along it—and was driven by the momentum of her movements half her length up the beach. Then she rolled over with a great lurch; her smoke-stacks went down with a crash, carrying the upper deck on which they stood with them, and the three men sank from sight in the smoke and fire.

In Both Camps

My name is Miss A. J. I was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Am twenty years of age. I have neither father or mother living. I have two sisters. In August, 1861, I left my home at Cambridge, without the knowledge or consent of my uncle, sisters, or friends, and came direct to Washington, with the intention of offering my services as a hospital-nurse, which was refused, on account of my age. I then procured a pass from General Wool to visit the different camps in and about Baltimore. I had no particular object or business in the army, but went out of mere curiosity. I spent some months in this way. While in the various camps, I was furnished by the commanding officers with a tent, and sometimes occupied quarters with the officers. In the fall of 1862 I went to the Army of the Potomac, with no different object in view; spent some time at General S.'s headquarters at Fairfax Court House. During this time was the guest of the General and his staff officers. After General S. left Fairfax Court House I went to Centreville. I do not now recollect who was in command at the time. I remained at Centreville but a short time, then went to Falls Church, from there to Fairfax Court House. In June or July last I attempted to pass the Federal pickets, for the purpose of visiting Drainesville, then outside our lines; was arrested, and taken to General S.'s headquarters, and by him sent to General M., who at once released me, and sent me back to General S.'s headquarters, where I remained until the army returned from Maryland. General S. was then relieved, when I joined General K.'s command, and went to the front, as the friends and companions of General C. We made our headquarters near Hartwood Church. Stopping at this point, General K. became very jealous of General C.'s attentions to me, and went to General M.'s headquarters and charged me with being a rebel spy. I was then arrested and sent to General M., Military Governor of Washington, who committed me to the Old Capitol Prison. I have spent two years and a half in the Union army, and during this time have been the guest of different officers, they furnishing me with horses, orderlies, escorts, sentinels at my tent, or quarter rations, &c. I have invariably received passes from these officers, to go and return when and where I pleased. During the time that I was with the Army of the Potomac I invariably wore major straps. I have repeatedly passed the outside pickets of the Federal army, several miles beyond, into the rebel lines; and was once captured by Moseby and taken to Aldie, to the house of a Mrs. Yankes Davis, whose husband is a Federal scout or spy. I was detained one or two days, then allowed to return. I further state, that during no part of the time that I was with the Federal army was I employed as guide, scout, spy, or hospital-nurse,

but, as stated before, a companion to the various commanding officers, as a private friend or companion. On the 7th day of November, 1863, I was released from the Old Capitol Prison, by order of the Secretary of War. During the time of my confinement I became intimately acquainted with Captain M., Mr. J. S. L., the superintendent, clerks, and others. On my release Mr. L. advised me to go to the house of a Mrs. McC., where I was at the time of my arrest. In consequence of Mr. L.'s intimacy with me, during my imprisonment, Mr. W. discharged him. I then went to Colonel J. A. H., at the War Department, and informed him that L. had been discharged, and the reason. Colonel H. then directed that L. should be assigned to duty at General A.'s headquarters, on condition that I would leave the city and return to my home at Cambridge. I did go to Boston, as I promised, and Mr. L. obtained his situation at General A.'s headquarters. I remained away about three weeks, when I returned to Mrs. McC.'s house.

On my discharge from prison, I signed a parole, one of the conditions of which was "that I should not enter the State of Virginia" without proper permission, during the rebellion; but, notwithstanding this obligation, I have made several ineffectual attempts to do so. In reference to my present arrest, I desire to state that I informed Mr. G. R. that I had procured a pass, in connection with Major W., of the Treasury Department, and Mrs. Moxen, that on Saturday afternoon last I proceeded in a carriage, with the two persons referred to, viz., Mr. W. and Mrs. M., to the Aqueduct Bridge, where we were halted by the guard, who informed us that Mr. W. and Mrs. M. could go on, but that Miss J. could not; that I then returned to Mrs. McC.'s. I also informed Mr. R. that said pass was procured for me through the influence of a brigadier-general (not naming him). I also informed others, at Mrs. McC.'s, that I made the attempt to cross, but was turned back by the guard. During the entire time since my leaving home, in 1861, I have led a very roving, and, may be, questionable life. I am now very unwell, owing to my long confinement and other causes, and desire to be released from custody, in order that I may return to my home and friends; and, if released, I pledge myself not to return to Washington during the present rebellion.

Ocean Pearls

William Phips, of Boston, a ship's carpenter, having first informed himself that there was a Spanish Wreck, wherein was lost a mighty Treasure, hitherto undiscovered, he had a strong Impression upon his Mind, that He must be the Discoverer; and he made such representations of his Design at Whitehall, that by the Year 1683, he became the Captain of a King's Ship, and arrived at New England, Commander of the *Algier-Rose*, a Frigate of Eighteen Guns, and Ninety-five Men.

To relate all the Dangers through which he passed, both by Sea and

Land, and all the Tiresome Trials of his Patience, as well as of his Courage, which Year after Year, the most vexing Accidents imaginable, delay'd the Success of his Design, it would even Tire the Patience of the Reader: For very great was the Experiment that Captain Phips made of the Italian Observation, He that can't suffer both Good and Evil, will never come to any great Preferment, Wherefore I shall supersede all Journal of his Voyages to and fro, with reciting one Instance of his Conduct, that show'd him to be a Person of no contemptible Capacity. While he was Captain of the *Algier-Rose,* his Men growing weary of their unsuccessful Enterprise, made a Mutiny, wherein they approach'd him on the Quarter-Deck, to join with them in Running away with the Ship, to drive a Trade of Pyracy on the South Seas. Captain Phips, though he had not so much of a Weapon, as an Ox-Goad, or a Jaw-bone in his Hands, yet like another Shamgar or Samson, with a most undaunted Fortitude, he rush'd in upon them, and with the Blows of his bare Hands, Fell'd many of them, and Quell'd all the Rest. But this is not the Instance which I intended: That which I intend is, That (as it has been related unto me) One Day, while his Frigate lay Careening, at a desolate Spanish Island, by the side of a Rock, from whence they had laid a Bridge to the Shoar, the Men, whereof he had about an Hundred, went all but about Eight or Ten, to divert themselves, as they pretended, in the Woods: Where, they all entered into an Agreement, which they Sign'd in a Ring, That about seven a Clock that Evening they would seize the Captain, and those Eight or Ten, which they knew to be True unto him, and leave them to perish on this Island, and so be gone away into the South Seas to seek their Fortune. Will the Reader now imagine, that Captain Phips having Advice of this Plot, but about an Hour and half before it was to be put in Execution, yet within Two Hours brought all these Rogues down upon their Knees, to beg for their lives? But so it was! For these Knaves considering, that they should want a Carpenter with them in their Villainous Expedition, sent a Messenger to fetch unto them the Carpenter, who was then at Work upon the Vessel; and unto him they show'd their Articles, telling him what he must look for, if he did not subscribe among them. The Carpenter being an honest Fellow, did with much importunity, prevail for one-half Hours Time to consider of the Matter; and returning to Work upon the Vessel, with a Spy by them set upon him, he feigned himself taken with a Fit of the Cholick, for the Relief whereof he suddenly ran unto the Captain in the Great Cabbin for a Dram; where, when he came, his business was only in brief, to tell the Captain of the horrible Distress which he was fallen into; but the Captain bid him as briefly, return to the Rogues in the Woods, and Sign their Articles, and leave him to provide for the Rest. The Carpenter was no sooner gone, but Captain Phips calling together the few Friends (it may be seven or eight) that were left him aboard, whereof the Gunner was one, demanded of them, whether they would stand by him in the Extremity, which he informed them was now come upon him; whereto they reply'd, They would stand by him, if

he could save them; And he Answered, By the help of God, he did not fear it. All their Provisions had been carried a shoar to a Tent, made for that purpose there; about which they had placed several Great Guns to defend it, in case of any Assault from Spaniards, that might happen to come that way. Wherefore Captain Phips, immediately ordered those Guns to be silently Drawn and Turn'd; and so, pulling up the Bridge, he charged his Great Guns aboard, and brought them to Bear on every side of the Tent. By this Time the Army of Rebels come out of the Woods; but as they draw near to the Tent of Provisions, they saw such a change of Circumstances, that they cryed out, We are Betray'd! and they were soon confirm'd in it, when they heard the Captain with a stern Fury call to them, Stand off, ye Wretches at your Peril! He quickly saw them cast into a more than ordinary confusion, when they saw Him ready to Fire his Great Guns upon them if they offered one Step further than he permitted them; And, when he had signified unto them his Resolve to abandon them unto all the Desolation which they had purposed for him; he caused the Bridge to be again laid, and his Men began to take the Provisions aboard. When the Wretches beheld what was coming upon them, they fell to very humble Entreaties; and at last, fell down upon their Knees, protesting, That they never had anything against him, except only his unwillingness to go away with the King's Ship upon the South Sea Design: But upon all other Accounts, they would choose rather to Live and Die with him, than with any Man in the World; however, since they saw how much he was dissatisfied at it, they would insist upon it no more, and humbly begg'd his Pardon. And when he judg'd that he had kept them on their Knees long enough, he having first secur'd their Arms, received them aboard; but he immediately weighed Anchor, and arriving at Jamaica, he Turn'd them off.

Now with a small Company of other Men, he sailed from thence to Hispaniola where, by the Policy of his Address, he fished out of a very old Spaniard (or Portuguese) a little advice about the true Spot where lay the Wreck, which he had been hitherto seeking, as unprosperously, as the Chymists have their Aurific Stone: That it was upon a Reef of Shoals, a few Leagues to the Northward of Port de la Plata, upon Hispaniola, a Port so call'd, it seems, from the landing of some of the Ship-wrecked Company, with a Boat full of Plate, saved out of their Sinking Frigate: Nevertheless, when he had searched very narrowly the Spot, whereof the old Spaniard had advised him, he not hitherto exactly hit upon it. Such Thorns did vex his Affairs, while he was in the Rose-Frigate; but none of all these things could return the Edge of his Expectations to find the Wreck; with such Expectations he return'd then into England, that he might there better furnish himself to Prosecute a New Discovery; for though he judged, he might, by proceeding a little further, have come at the right Spot, yet he found his present Company too ill a Crew to be confided in.

So proper was his Behaviour, that the best Noble Men in the Kingdom, now admitted him into their Conversation; but yet he was opposed by

powerful Enemies, that Clogg'd his Affairs with such Demurrages, and such Disappointments, as would have wholly Discouraged his Designs, if his Patience had not bin Invincible. He who can wait, hath what he desireth. This his Indefatigable Patience, with a proportionable Diligence, at length overcame the Difficulties that had bin thrown in his way; and prevailing with the Duke of Albemarl, and some other Persons of Quality, to fit him out, he set Sail for the Fishing Ground, which had bin so well baited, half an Hundred Years before: And as he had already discovered his Capacity for business, in many considerable Actions, he now added unto those Discoveries, by not only providing all, but also by inventing many of the Instruments necessary to the prosecution of his intended Fishery. Captain Phips arriving with a Ship and Tender, at Port de la Plata, made a stout Canoo of a stately Cotton Tree, so large as to carry Eight or Ten Oars, for the making of which Periaga (as they call it) he did, with the same industry that he did everything else, employ his own Hand and Adse, and endure no little hardship, lying abroad in the Woods many Nights together. This Periaga, with the Tender, being Anchored at a place convenient, the Periaga kept Busking to and again, but could only discover a Reef of Rising Shoals thereabouts, called The Boilers, which Rising to be within Two or Three Foot of the Surface of the Sea, were yet so steep, that a Ship striking on them, would immediately sink down, who could say, how many Fathom? into the Ocean. Here they could get no other Pay for their long peeping among the Boilers, but only such as caused them to think upon returning to their Captain, with the Bad News of their total Disappointment. Nevertheless, as they were upon the Return, one of the Men looking over the side of the Periaga, into the calm Water, he spied a Sea Feather, growing as he judged, out of a Rock; whereupon they bade one of their Indians to Dive, and fetch this Feather, that they might however carry home something with them, and make at least, as fair a Triumph as Caligula's.

The Diver, bringing up the Feather, brought therewithal a surprising story, That he perceived a Number of Great Guns in the Watry World where he had found his Feather; the Report of which Great Guns exceedingly astonished the whole Company; and at once, turned their Despondencies for their ill success, into Assurances, that they had now lit upon the True spot of Ground which they had been looking for; and they were further confirmed in these Assurances, when upon further Diving, the Indian fetcht up a Sow, as they stil'd it, or a Lump of Silver, worth perhaps, Two or Three Hundred Pounds.

Upon this they prudently Buoy'd the place, that they might readily find it again; And they went back unto their Captain, whom for some while, they distressed with nothing but such Bad News, as they formerly thought they must have carried him.

Nevertheless they so slipt in the Sow of Silver, on one side under the Table, where they were now sitting with the Captain, and hearing him express his Resolutions to wait still patiently upon the Providence of God under these

Disappointments, that when he should look on one side, he might see that Odd Thing before him.

At last he saw it; seeing it, he cryed out with some Agony, Why? What is this? Whence comes this? And then, with changed Countenances, they told him how, and where they had got it:

Then, said he, Thanks be to God! We are made.

And so, away they went, all hands to Work; wherein they had this one further piece of Remarkable Prosperity, that whereas, if they had first fallen upon that part of the Spanish Wreck, where the Pieces of Eight had been stowed in Bags among the Ballast, they had seen a more laborious, and less enriching time of it: Now, most happily, they first fell upon that Room in the Wreck, where the Bullion had been stored up; and they so prospered in this New Fishery, that in a little while they had, without the loss of any Man's Life, brought up Thirty-Two Tuns of Silver; for it was now come to measuring of Silver by Tuns. Besides which, one Adderly of Providence, who had formerly been very helpful to Captain Phips in the Search of this Wreck, did upon former Agreement meet him now, with a little Vessel here; and he, with his few hands, took up about Six Tuns of Silver; whereof nevertheless, he made so little use, that in a year or two, he died at Bermudas, and as I have heard, he ran Distracted some while before he died. Thus did there once again, come into the Light of the Sun, a Treasure which had been half an Hundred Years groaning under the Waters. And in this time, there was grown upon the Plate, a Crust like Limestone, to the thickness of several Inches; which Crust being broken open, by Irons contrived for that purpose, they knockt out whole Bushels of rusty Pieces of Eight, which were grown thereunto. Besides that incredible Treasure of Plate in various forms, thus fetch'd up, from seven or eight Fathom under Water, there were vast Riches of Gold and Pearls and Jewels, which they also lit upon; and indeed, for a more Comprehensive Invoice, I must summarily say, All that a Spanish Frigate uses to be enricht withal. Thus did they continue Fishing till their Provisions failing them, 'twas time to be gone; but before they went, Captain Phips caused Adderly and his Folk to swear, That they would none of them discover the place of the Wreck, or come to the Place any more till the next Year, when he expected again to be there himself. And it was also Remarkable, that though the Sows came up still so fast, that on the very last Day of their being there, they took up Twenty, yet it was afterwards found, that they had in a manner cleared that Room of the Ship, where those Massy Things were stowed.

But there was one extraordinary Distress which Captain Phips now plunged himself into: For his Men were come out with him upon Seamen's Wages, at so much per Month; and when they saw such vast Litters of Silver Sows and Pigs, as they call them, come on board them, at the Captain's Call, they knew not how to bear it, that they should not share all among themselves, and be gone to lead a short life and a merry in a Climate, where the Arrest of those that had hired them, should not reach them. In this terrible Distress, he made his Vows

unto Almighty God, that if the Lord would carry him safe home to England, with what he had now given him, to suck of the abundance of the Seas, and of the Treasures hid in the Sands, he would for ever Devote himself unto the Interests of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of his People, especially in the Country which he did himself Originally belong unto. And he then used all the obliging Arts imaginable, to make his Men true unto him, especially by assuring them, that besides their Wages, they should have ample Requitals made unto them; which if the rest of his Employers would not agree unto, he would himself distribute his own share among them. Relying upon the Word of One, whom they had ever found worthy of their Love, and of their Trust, they declared themselves Content: But still keeping a most careful eye upon them, he hastened back for England, with as much Money as he thought he could then safely Trust his Vessel withal; not counting it safe to supply himself with necessary Provisions at any nearer Port, and so return unto the Wreck, by which delays, he wisely feared lest all might be lost, more ways than one. Though he also left so much behind him, that many from diverse parts made very considerably voyages of Gleanings after his Harvest; which came to pass by certain Bermudians, compelling of Adderly's Boy, whom they spirited away with them, to tell them the exact place where the Wreck was to be found.

Captain Phips now coming up to London, in the Year 1687, with near Three Hundred Thousand Pounds Sterling aboard him, did acquit himself with such an exemplary Honesty, that partly by fulfilling his Assurances to the Seamen, and partly by his exact and punctual Care to have his Employers defrauded of nothing that might conscientiously belong unto them, he had less than sixteen Thousand pounds left unto himself: as an Acknoeledgment of which Honesty in him, the Duke of Albermarl made unto his Wife, whom he never saw, a present of a Golden Cup, near a thousand pounds in value. The Character of an Honest Man, he had so merited in the whole Course of his Life, and especially in this last Act of it, that this, in conjunction with his other serviceable Qualities, procured him the Favours of the Greatest Persons in the Nation: And He that had been so diligent in his Business, must now stand before Kings, and not stand before mean Men; There were indeed, certain mean Men, if base, little, dirty Tricks will entitle Men to Meanness, who urged the King to seize his whole Cargoe, instead of the Tenth, upon his first Arrival, on this pretence, that he had not been rightfully inform'd of the True State of the Case, when he granted the Patent, under the Protection whereof these particular Men had made themselves Masters of all this Mighty Treasure; but the King replied, That he had been rightly informed by Captain Phips of the whole matter, as it now proved, and that it was the slanders of one then present, which had, unto his Damage, hindred him from hearkning to the Information. Wherefore he would give them, he said, no Disturbance, they might keep what they had got; but Captain Phips, he saw, was a Person of that Honesty, Fidelity and Ability, that he should not want his Countenance. Ac-

cordingly the King, in consideration of the Service done by him, in bringing such a Treasure into the nation, conferr'd upon him the Honor of Knighthood; and if we now reckon him, A Knight of the Golden Fleece, the stile might . . . justify it. Or call him, if you please, The Knight of Honesty; for it was Honesty with Industry, that Raised him; and he became a Mighty River without the running in of Muddy Water to make him so. Reader, Now make a Pause, and behold, One Raised by God!

The Black Christian

Upon the Geissenberg (Goat Mountain) in Westphalia, there may still be traced the walls of a castle, the ancient haunt of robbers. They took their nocturnal rounds, and made depredations upon the corn and cattle, which they brought into their own court and afterwards sold to more distant villagers. The last robber-chief who held sway there is said to have been Johan Hûbner. He wore an iron shirt and was clothed in mail from head to foot. More powerful than any man of his age, he became the terror of the surrounding country. He had only one eye, his beard and hair black and bushy, and his whole features of a terrific cast. The place is still shown, exhibiting the corner of a large hall, of which a broken window yet remains, where he held his revels with his companions. Though he had only one, his eye was upon every spot throughout the land, and whenever he saw a strange knight, he cried, "Heloh! there spurs a knight! a noble beast! heloh!" His followers were then on the watch, and when he drew nearer, they stopped and dispatched him, and led his horse to their captain. Now, there was a certain Prince of Dillenburg called the Black Christian, a very stout knight, who heard a good deal of Hûbner's proceedings, for his boors were all loud in their complaints against him. This same Black Christian happened to have a very shrewd squire of the name of Hans Flick, whom he resolved to dispatch over the whole district in pursuit of Johan Hûbner. The prince in the meanwhile remained with his knights in ambuscades about Giller, whither his tenants sent him provisions—bread, and butter, and cheese. Hans, not being personally acquainted with Johan Hûbner, beat up all quarters in the land, and inquired of all he met for some tidings of him. At length he came to a smithy where all hands were busy shoeing horses, besides a vast number of waggon-wheels that stood round, and seemed to be in want of the blacksmith's finishing hand.

Leaning with his back against one of these was a man blind of an eye, and with an iron jerkin on his shoulders. Hans Flick directly made up to him and said, "God save thee, thou iron-jerkined jockey with only one eye! is not thy name Johan Hûbner from Geissenberg?" "Johan Hûbner!" replied the other, "why Johan Hûbner lies stretched upon the wheel!" which Hans directly took to allude to the in-

fliction of his sentence—that of torture. "Was that lately?" he added to Hûbner. "Yes, to-day for the first time," was the reply. Hans Flick, however, was not half satisfied, and kept his eye upon the man upon the wheel, as he had literally represented himself. The man soon took occasion to say in a low tone to the smith that he would have his horse shod with his shoes reversed, foremost end behind, for it would be best. This the smith did, and Johan Hûbner rode away, observing to Hans as he went, "God save you, my brave boy! tell thy master that he should send old Faust after me, but no people who come lousing behind one's ear like thee!" Hans Flick stood still a moment and watched which way he rode over field and field into the wood, and away he rode after him to mark where the fox took to cover. When out of sight he took to his horse's track; but here he was soon at fault, for Hûbner led him such a very roundabout and unsatisfactory chase, that shortly he was at a dead loss, as wherever he had gone forward there Hans was sure to turn back, not being in the secret of the shoes.

At last, however, one moonlight night Hans fell in with him in another place, where he was reposing on the heath with his followers, employed in watching stolen cattle in the wood. He directly hastened to acquaint Prince Christian, the black knight, with this discovery, who set out with his squires, travelling with speed night and morning, every rider having first bound his horse's shoes with moss. In this way they came close upon the robbers, sprang into the midst of them, and a fierce encounter ensued. The Black Christian and Hûbner met, and they laid hard and heavy hand upon each other's iron helms and jerkins. Loud was the clang and fast flowed the blood, until fortune decided against Johan Hûbner, who lay dead under the black knight's feet, who then rode to take possession of his castle upon the Geissenberg.

They buried Hûbner in a corner, and the prince having placed a vast pile of wood round the tower, contrived to bury it also in the ruins along with its master. The huge tower fell in the evening just as the villagers were milking their kine, and the whole surrounding district trembled at the fall. Many of the stones are yet to be seen lying at the foot of the mountain. And Johan Hûbner is even now said often to appear about midnight, being known by his blind eye, and seated on a coal-black steed, which he rides up and down the rampart.

Yellow Tiger

It was fully three long hours behind its time, that great Lyons diligence; which, considering that the roads were clear and open, was curious, to say the least of it. This was at the old inn at Troyes, bearing the name, *Tigre Jaune*, or Yellow Tiger, on a cool summer's evening. It had been a fierce, glaring day; and we—madame who directs, that is, and myself—were looking over from the wooden gallery that runs round the court, speculating what it

might be that detained the great Lyons diligence.

Le Boeuf from below (he was waiting to bring out his relay of fresh and shining steeds) had it that nothing but the *casse-cou*—the *casse-cou damné*—could be at the bottom of it. His own private impression was that the great diligence was at that moment resting on its side in the depths of that gully. Where was it? Well, let him see. They all knew the steep hill a little beyond the last stage. And the twist in the road just after? Well, the villainous *casse-cou* was close by, at the very turn; and, if the *Faquin* of a coachman had not his beasts well in hand (and they pulled like three hundred devils) or if he chanced to be a little *gris*—in his cups, that is—the great diligence would, of a dead certainty, meet with some heavy misfortune. *Dame!* ought he not to know! Had not his own beast run right into it one Saturday night? (Significant laughter here, from bystanders.)

One of M. Le Boeuf's coadjutors, being pressed for his opinion, submitted that it could be only Gringoire. He had prophesied no good of that animal from the first. Take his word for it, it was Gringoire—who, by the way, carried his tail in a fashion that no well-regulated quadruped should do; Gringoire had done all the mischief. He had got the bit between his teeth, or had shied, or had thrown himself on the ground, and had so overturned the great Lyons diligence.

The brethren standing round, all in blue frocks and shining black belts, loudly dissented from this doctrine, as reflecting too severely on Gringoire and the driver. *Peste!* the horse was a good horse at bottom, with a mouth of iron, it is true, but a good horse for all that. As for Pepin the *cocher,* the *bonhomme* knew what he was about; was never *gris,* except when off duty.

As the discussion warmed up, other parties lounging about the gateway and outhouses drew near and listened. And so a little crowd was gathered below, from which rose, upwards to our gallery, a din of altercation, seasoned with cross-fire of contradiction and plentiful *pestes, mordieus, sacrés,* and such profane expletives.

Said Madame, turning to me with a smile, having listened tranquilly for some minutes, "The heavy diligence will arrive, nevertheless, whatever these *gaillards* may say, I have no fears for it."

"You are expecting some guests, I think you told me?"

"Yes, monsieur: that good, gentle, M. Lemoine, with his mother and pretty fiancée. Three travelers, sir. Heavens! I had forgotten about the golden chamber. Fanchonette! Fanchonette!"

Here a glass door opposite opened softly, and a little figure in bodice and petticoat of bright colors, with small lace cap and ribbons on the back of her head, stepped out upon the gallery, as it were, straight from one of Lancry's pictures. This was Fanchonette, and the glass door opened into the gilded chamber. She curtsied low to me, the stranger. She said she had but that instant been putting one last touch to the golden chamber, brushing away some specks of dust accumulated since mid-day upon the mirrors and Dresden figures. M. Lemoine, when he arrived, would find everything looking

as bright and fresh as in his own château at home. With this little speech, the Lancry sketch curtsied low, and disappeared quickly behind the glass-door.

"This M. Lemoine seems to have made many friends," I said, turning to madame.

"No wonder, monsieur," she replied, "he is so good and gentle, if that wicked brother of his would only let him live in peace."

"How is that?" I said, beginning to grow a little curious concerning this M. Lemoine. "What of this ogre of a brother?"

"He is his half-brother," madame said, "as wicked and graceless monster as ever came upon the earth of the *bon Dieu*. His own father left away all his estates from him, and gave them over to M. Lemoine; not but that he himself was handsomely taken care of—*mon Dieu!* far too handsomely!" He, however, had spent it all, and was now wandering about the world, a beggar.

"It certainly seemed a curious disposition," madame went on to say, "considering that M. Lemoine was only madame's son—she having been married before—and that wicked M. Charles his own child. But nobody could like him—not even his own father."

And this M. Lemoine was expected here that evening?

"Yes," she said, "in company with his mother, a cold, haughty woman, that always went with him, and with mademoiselle his cousin, to whom he was to be wedded as soon as his wretched health permitted. *Voilà tout!*" There was the whole history for me! Would I excuse her now for a few moments?

During the last few minutes that madame was speaking, I had noticed that a glass door on the right had opened softly, disclosing a prospect of a gentleman sipping his wine and smoking a cigar leisurely after dinner. No doubt the cool evening breeze was found to enter very gratefully, for the gentleman presently pushed the little gilt table from him, and walked out slowly upon the gallery, still smoking his cigar. He had a disagreeable simper always put on below his light yellow mustaches, and he had, besides, a fashion of keeping his hands buried in his trousers pockets, which seemed as full and capacious as a Turk's. He looked down for some minutes into the court below, simpering pleasantly at the discussion still going forward, then walked slowly round to where I was standing, and, bowing low, prayed me to have the bounty and condescension to allow him to light his cigar at mine. He had been so maladroit as to let his own go out. Curiously enough, I had seen him, but a minute before, slyly rub his cigar against the wall with great secrecy and mystery. The significance of this act was now quite plain to me. I should have liked him better if he had made his advances openly, without any such little trickery. It was a pleasant evening, he observed, diligently lighting his cigar. I too, he supposed, was waiting to see the heavy diligence come in. No. Would I forgive him for thinking so at first; for every creature in that dull place seemed to take surprising interest in the movements of that huge machine. "Messieurs there," he added, simpering con-

temptuously, on the people below, "find pleasing excitement in such talk. The poor souls! They know no better—ha! ha!" His laugh was disagreeable—very sweet and hollow-sounding. "Have you been here long?" he went on; "I have been sojourning here two days."

"I only arrived this evening," I answered, dryly enough.

"Two days; would you believe it—two mortal days! Why, it is my belief that I should have expired at the end of the fourth hour but for la petite Fanchonette yonder, whom, by the way, you may have seen. A little Chloris."

I was beginning to find this gentleman's manner so little to my taste, that I prepared to turn away and make for my own room, when suddenly a faint rolling sound, accompanied with a distant musical tinkling, fell upon my ears. "Hark!" said he. "It comes, the diligence *la désirée, la bien aimée!* See, the gamins are already in ecstasy!"

It was singular—the contempt he showed for the poor men below. They, by this time, were all rushing to the great gateway; so there could be no question but that the great diligence was approaching. Heavy plunging sounds, as of concussion against strong timber doors, with shrill whinnying, denoted that the fresh relay knew also what was coming, and were impatient to be led forth. Madame herself had caught the sounds from afar off in her little room, and was now tripping down the broad steps into the court. Lattices were opened suddenly in the roof and other parts, and eager faces put forth to listen. Gradually it drew nearer; the tinkling soon changed to a sort of harmonious jangle; there was a vigorous tramping of heavy hoofs, cheerful cries from the driver encouraging his beasts, with a stray note from his horn now and again; then more jingling and harsh clatter mingled together, with hollow rumbling now quite close at hand. The crowd at the archway fall suddenly to each side, and there appear at the opening two dusty thick-set horses, one on the right, of a high cream-color, with a huge black patch on his haunch. That must be Gringoire, beyond mistake; for M. Le Boeuf is pointing to him triumphantly. After Gringoire and his yoke-fellow toil two other great creatures, all four being garnished with high collars fringed handsomely with red and blue tassels. And behind them comes reeling the great moving mountain itself, that has journeyed down from Lyons, whitened over with a crust of dust. There is a great tarpaulin covering up baggage, high heaped, well whitened, too; and there are many faces looking from *rotonde,* and *coupé,* and *intérieur,* of baked and unwholesome aspect, as though they had gathered their share of the dust also. In the center of the court it has pulled up short. The doors are dragged open, short ladders applied, and many figures in blouses and shining belts are crawling up the sides, making for the roof. Now, too, are led forth the four fresh and gamesome animals, who beguile the tedium of yoking by divers posturings and fierce sweeps of their hinder legs at unwary bystanders.

But from the *coupé* was being assisted forth, by gentle hands—madame herself aiding tenderly—a tall man, delicate-looking and slightly bent. He seemed a little feeble, but walked better as he leant on the arm of a stately

lady in black, looking haughtily round on all about her. On the side was a young girl, golden-haired and graceful, whom I knew to be the future bride. I was all this while leaning over the balustrade, looking down into the court.

Presently, a very curious scene took place. I had seen the gentleman of the yellow mustaches, simpering to himself as though much amused at what was going forward. But, when the young man and the two ladies had begun to ascend the wooden staircase, he threw away his cigar, and walked leisurely down to meet them—

"Dearest brother," he said, withdrawing one hand from his deep pockets, *"soyez le bienvenu!* I am rejoiced to see you looking so fresh and well. But the journey must have fatigued you terribly!"

The tall lady's eyes flashed fire, and she stepped forward in front of her son.

"Go away! *Retirez-vous, infame!"* she said. "What do you do here?—how dare you present yourself to us?"

"Sweet madame," he said, bowing low, "accept my humble excuses; but I wish to speak privately with my dear brother here, who, by the way, seems to be getting all his strength back again. I have waited here—two whole days—looking forward to this pleasure."

"Stand back quickly!" said the tall lady trembling with rage. "Will nobody take this *infame* from our sight? Messieurs! messieurs! I entreat you, make him withdraw!"

The men in blouses were gathering round gradually—to whom our hostess was vehemently unfolding the whole history, plainly working on their feelings. It was held to be a crying shame, and M. Le Boeuf was proposing to interfere physically. But young M. Lemoine gently drew his mother to one side.

"Dearest mother," he said, "let us hear what he has to say. He can do us no harm."

"No, *Dieu merci,"* she said, "we are beyond his malice. But you must not speak with him, my son."

All this while the gentleman with the saffron mustaches had been leaning back against the rail, surveying both with a quiet smile.

"Well, brother," he said, at last, "you see, madame—gentle-minded, religious woman that she is—wishes to inflame matters. Let us finish with this child's work. I have journeyed many leagues to speak with you, and do you suppose I will let myself be turned back by caprice of this sort! Give me half an hour—but one half hour. She shall be by all the while. Also mademoiselle, if she have any fancy for it."

The young man looked round at the haughty dame beside him.

"This seems only reasonable," he said; "we had best hear what he has to say. Well, brother, come to my room—to the golden chamber, in an hour. But, mind, this shall be the last time."

"With all my heart," said the other, bowing profoundly. "I shall trouble you no further after that. Meanwhile, accept my gratulations, *Mademoiselle est vraiment belle! Au revoir,* then, in an hour."

He lifted his hat as they passed him, and then walked down, unconcernedly, among the blue-frocked burgeoisie of the court.

"Don't stop up the way, good people," he said, coolly putting M. Le Boeuf aside, "it hinders all comfort in walking"; then lighted a cigar, and strode out carelessly upon the high road.

The glass-doors of the golden chamber had been thrown open, disclosing a pretty little room adorned fancifully with mirrors and light chintz hangings. Into this they entered, the hostess leading the way, and bringing forward an arm-chair into which M. Lemoine dropped himself wearily. Madame was taking counsel with Fanchonette, at the end of the room (the chintz and Louis-quinze mirrors were quite in keeping with the Lancry figure), and, as the glass-doors shut-to gently, I saw his cousin bending over him tenderly. He looked up pleasantly into her face.

Within the hour's time, the great diligence had departed, toppling fearfully as it passed out under the archway; while the men in blue—their day's work being ended—dispersed and left the court quite bare and empty. Soon after, the stranger came sauntering in, his hands deeper in his pockets, well up to his time. At the foot of the steps he stopped and called out loudly to Fanchonette, "Go quickly, *ma petite,* and see if it be their pleasure to receive me."

Soon returned Fanchonette, tripping lightly, with word that they were already waiting for monsieur—would he follow her?

"On, then, *mignonne!*" he exclaimed, and walked upstairs, round to the golden chamber, entering boldly, and letting the glass-doors swing-to with loud clatter behind him.

Madame, our hostess, reported to me afterwards, that as she was passing by she heard strange tones, as of fierce and angry quarrel—apparently the voices of M. Lemoine's mother and the stranger. She had often heard that there was some ugly secret in the family—some skeleton-closet as it were—which he, no doubt, was threatening to make known to the world. He was *lache-lache!* madame said, several times, with indignation. It was curious, too, how the interest of the whole establishment became concentrated on that one chamber. It was known universally that there was some mystery going on inside. Even Fanchonette found occasion to pass that way now and then, gleaning, no doubt, stray ends of discourse. I, myself, felt irresistibly moved to wander round in that direction; but, for the sake of public opinion, had held out against the little weakness. It would be more profitable, as it was such a cool, fresh evening, to go forth and stroll leisurely toward the village, scarcely a mile away. So I sauntered forth at an easy pace from beneath the archway.

It was very grateful, that evening walk down to the village, lying along all manner of green lanes and shady places. There was a kind of short cut through the fields—pointed out by an obliging peasant—which led across rustic bridges and through a little wood, very tempting and retired. There was the village church, too, just after getting clear of the wood; an ancient structure, and very gray and mossy, with the door standing open. I looked in and found *M. le curé* at the high altar steps instructing his little band of children for first communion or other great act. A gentle, patient man

looked *M. le curé,* as he stood within his altar-rails, and very innocent and eager seemed his little following. I waited afar off—just under the porch—for many minutes, listening, looking around, too, at the pretty decoration of the church—garnished plentifully with white rose-wreaths, perhaps for some high festival coming on.

It was long past ten o'clock when I found myself at the door of the old Yellow Tiger. That establishment was now about sinking into its night's repose; lights beginning to twinkle here and there at strange windows. M. Le Boeuf and all his company had long since departed, and as I entered, a man was coming down the steps with a huge bunch of keys to fasten up all securely for the night. The day's work was done, and it was time for all Christians to be in their rooms. So I took the lamp and made straight for the little alcove chamber where I was to repose; leaving, as is best to do in strange places, the light burning upon the table.

When I awoke again, it must have been a couple of hours past midnight, and I found that my lamp must have gone out. For there was a column of thick black smoke curling upwards from it to the ceiling. The night was miserably warm and uncomfortable, and I foresaw that there was at least an hour or two of wretched tossing in store for me. To which prospect I at once resigned myself, and waited calmly for the tumult to begin.

Though the lamp had gone out, there was still abundance of light pouring into the room through the glass-door and its thin muslin blind. For, the moon was up and made every corner of my little room as light as day. From the alcove where I lay—just facing the door—I could be pretty sure that the court-yard was steeped in a broad sheet of white light. So, too, must have been the gallery running round (this was my little speculation, striving to keep away the hour of torment), and its many sleepers, now fast bound in their slumbers. Just then the little clock set to chiming out three, so I had gone tolerably near the hour. As I was thinking what musical bells were to be found occasionally in these out-of-the-way villages, it suddenly struck me that there was a creaking sound outside in the gallery, as of a light footstep. The night was so very still that tnere could be no doubt of it. There was a creaking sound in the gallery. At the same instant, Hercule, the great white hound, always chained up of nights in the porch, gave forth a long, melancholy howl. Whereupon the sounds ceased suddenly.

By and by they commenced again, coming nearer this time and mystifying me exceedingly, when suddenly, having my eyes fixed upon the door, a tall shadow seemed to flit swiftly across the door—a man's shadow, too. What could this mean? Who could be moving about in this secret fashion? Perhaps a watchman, kept by madame to look after the safety of their premises; perhaps a stranger with some unlawful purpose. I got up hastily and went over to the door to look out. There was no sign of any person being there; the gallery was perfectly deserted. The court below was—exactly as I had been figuring it—flooded with moonlight. There were also those fantastic shadows shooting out from the foot of the pillars. and underneath the

gallery deep cavernous recesses, steeped in shade and mystery. Hercule was still at his mournful song, and something must have troubled his slumbers. Still, as I said, there was so sign of any living creature; so, after a little further contemplation of the tranquil scene, I shut the door gently, taking care to secure it from within, and went back to the alcove.

The diligence passed by at six o'clock the next morning and was to call at the great gate to take me up. It seemed to me that I had just turned round to sleep, when a hoarse voice came through the glass-door, calling to me and rattling it impatiently.

"What do you want?" I said sleepily.

"The diligence, M'sieu! it is coming over the hill. M'sieu will have to hasten himself."

I jumped up hastily and was in my clothes in an instant. Madame, with delicate forethought, had a little cup of coffee ready (the great diligence would halt for breakfast some two or three hours later), which I had finished just as the jangling music of the great diligence made itself heard at the door. As I was following out M. Le Boeuf, who had my luggage on his shoulder, a piercing scream rang out, so sharp and full of anguish that all who were there turned and rushed back into the court. There was M. Lemoine's mother out upon the gallery in a light dressing gown, leaning over the rail, tossing her arms wildly about. There, too, was madame our hostess, struggling hard with the golden-haired young girl at the door of M. Lemoine's room. Little Fanchonette, with her hands covering up her face, was running around the gallery, in a sort of distracted manner, calling *"au secours!"* We were at the room-door in an instant.

"O such a terrible thing!" said madame; "don't go in—don't go in!"

I knew well what that terrible thing was, having had a dreadful presentiment from the very first minute. Upon his bed was lying M. Lemoine, on his face, quite stiff and cold; and, as they turned him over, two discolored marks upon his throat came into view. He had been most foully done to death—had poor M. Lemoine.

Suddenly someone whispered, Where was the stranger: he who had arrived yesterday?—and someone else walked away on tip-toe toward his room. He had departed. It was plain, too, that his bed had not been slept in. It was easy, therefore, to know at whose door to lay this foul deed.

By this time, madame, now quite motionless and exhausted, had been got into the house, as well as the yellow-haired young lady. *M. le conducteur* said very quietly to me, that it was an awful thing to happen, an awful thing. He felt for madame's situation, but he had his orders and must go forward without delay. So he was at my service from that moment.

As we came down the steps, we found that the court had filled up with strange rapidity; many men in the blue garments having gathered there, talking softly together and surmising; the gendarmes would be there, they said, in a few minutes. Le Boeuf and others were already scouring the country. So I ascended into the great diligence, sorrowfully; thinking what blight and desolation had of a sudden fallen upon the peaceful house. The *cocher* was impatient; he had had a hard time of it

with his four struggling animals. They had been making the stones and gravel fly about furiously for the last quarter of an hour. The door was slammed to, the conductor had clambered up to his nook, the musical jingling, the crunching, the rumbling began again afresh, and the great diligence moved onward. As we reached the top of the hill, we met six tall men in cocked hats and boots, and very white shoulder-belts. These were the gendarmes that had been sent for; now on their way to the old Yellow Tiger Inn.

How many years was it before I came by that road again, through the pleasant bye-ways and *paysages* of France the Beautiful, as her sons and daughters like to call her? Close upon four, I think. This time I had been wandering over the country in true Zingaro humor; casting about for ancient quiet little towns, removed from great highways and tourist profanities, where about choice street corners and maimed statues in broken arches and a rare fountain or so, with a certain primitiveness of dress and manners among its men and women by way of local coloring. I thought frequently of the late Mr. Sterne and his tender soul, and went round very much after the easy, lounging manner of that famous sentimentalist.

In an admirable specimen of this ancient town architecture, bearing the name of Monceaux, I found myself one evening, after some three or four days' sojourning, sitting by an open lattice and looking out on their chief street. This was in a furnished lodging over a little wineshop, which I had secured at incredibly small charges. I knew that over my head there was a wonderful bit of gable with vast slopes of red tiling, and, as of course, a little belfry and weather-cock, wherein the daws did most congregate. I knew that, externally, great beams, handsomely colored, crossed diagonally just below my little diamond-paned lattice, and that underneath was a deep doorway with well-wrought arch and pillars, which might very well have been abstracted from the old church hard by. I knew also that at the angle of the house, just on a line with my lattice, was a niche, or resting-place, for a certain holy woman now in glory, who had once been richly dight in gold and coloring, but was now as dull and gray as her stone canopy. To her, I noted that every man as he passed uncovered reverently; which was indeed only fitting, she being patroness and special guardian of the town.

The day's work was done, and it was a Saturday evening. Therefore were gathered about the street corner under the saint, many of the Monceaux wise men taking their ease in the cool of the evening and discussing the fair or festival nearest at hand. Past them would flit by, occasionally, coming from drawing water at the fountain, the Maries and Victorines of the place, in petticoats of bright colors and dainty caps, and with little crosses on their necks. There came by, too, a tall dark man, without a hat, holding up his gown with one hand—*monsieur le curé,* in a word—who stayed for a few moments' talk with the wise men. His day's work at the church, shrifts and all, was now over, and he was speeding on to the *presbytère* close by. Altogether, I said to myself, as pretty a little cabinet bit as I have seen for many a long day.

Down the little street facing us (the patroness from her angle could command undisturbed prospect of no less that three streets) came tripping lightly a young girl in black, with a little black silk hood half drawn over her head. I saw her coming a long way off, even from the moment she had issued from the old house that hung so over upon the street. As she drew nearer, there came upon me suddenly a reminiscence as of Lancry and of a juicy brush and clear limpid coloring. I thought I recollected something of that face and figure, and, by the time she was passing under the window, I had placed her on a certain gallery just coming forth from the golden chamber, with the old Yellow Tiger as background. So I stooped over and called out softly, "Fanchonette!"

She was a little startled, and looked up. It was Fanchonette beyond all mistake. She was not scared at being so accosted, but stopped still a moment to know what I might want.

"Fanchonette," I said, "don't you remember? How gets on the old Yellow Tiger and madame?"

She put her little finger to her forehead thoughtfully.

"Ah! I recollect it all now!" she said, clapping her hands. "I recollect monsieur perfectly. Monsieur was there," she added sorrowfully, "all that terrible night."

"Wait for a moment, Fanchonette," I said. "I am coming down to you." For somehow I always shrank from that paternal manner of the Reverend Mr. Sterne, when opening up the country sentimentally; so I went down to meet Fanchonette—ungallantly enough—at the door. "Now, what has brought you to these parts?" I asked. "Tell me all your little story, Fanchonette."

"O, monsieur!" she said, "I left the Yellow Tiger long since, and now serve madame—the tall, dark lady whose son was, *hélas!* so miserably—"

"Ah! I remember that night well." And the young fiancée, the golden-haired demoiselle, where was she? I asked.

She had been with the *Soeurs de la Miséricorde* since a long time back—in noviciate, Fanchonette believed. But had I not taken an interest in her—at least she thought so—and in the family? I had certainly, I said, and had often thought of them since. Ah! she was sure of it. She had noticed it in me that night when madame was recounting her history—and now, if I would be so good, so condescending, she said, putting up her hands, and actually trembling with eagerness, to come with her for one short quarter of an hour to her mistress. Oh! I did not know what a relief, what raising up from *désespoir,* I should bring with me.

I looked at her a little mystified. To be sure, I said; but what could I do for her? O, much; a great deal! I could help them very much indeed! The Blessed Mother had sent me to them as a guardian angel and deliverer. Madame had been utterly crushed past hope; but now all would go well. Would I go now? She was stopping in the great house yonder.

This was mysterious enough, but I said by all means; and so Fanchonette tripped on—a messenger of good tidings of great joy—leading the way to the great house that hung so into the street. Arriving under its shadow, she lifted the latch softly, and, leaving me

below, ran up to tell madame. She was away some five minutes, and then called over the stairs that monsieur was to mount, if he pleased. So I ascended a dark, winding staircase, such as are much found in such mansions, and was led along a low, narrow corridor into a large handsome room, fitted however with mullions and panes of diamond pattern much as in my own tenement. Here in a great gilt chair (very tarnished though) surrounded with cabinets and mirrors and clocks and china of the pattern popular in the days of King Louis the Fifteenth, was Madame Lemoine, all in black, who sat back stiff and stern in her chair, regarding me closely as I came in. I knew her at once. She was just as I had seen her on the stairs of the Yellow Tiger, only her features had grown sharpened and pinched a little; her eyes, too, had now and then a sharp, restless glare. She looked at me hard for a few moments.

"Sit down, monsieur, sit down," she said, nervously, "here just beside me. Do you know that you can help us—that is, if you are willing to do so?"

I said that anything I could do for them, provided it fell within the next few days, they were heartily welcome to.

"Thanks, thanks, thanks," she said many times over with the same nervous manner. "You shall hear first what is wanted of you—not so very much after all. Rather, first what do you know of us, or must I go through the whole wretched story—?"

If she alluded, I said, to a certain fatal night some four years since, why—Ah, true! I had been there. Fanchonette had told her all that.

"Well, monsieur," she went on, rubbing her thin fingers together, "how do you suppose my miserable life has been spent since then? What has been my food and nourishment all that while? Guess?"

I shook my head. I could not pretend to say what had been madame's occupation.

"Try, try!" she said, striking the smooth knob of her chair, her eyes ranging from object to object in the quick, restless way I had noticed. "What was the fittest employment for the poor broken-hearted mother? Come! Make a guess, monsieur!"

It had grown a little darker now, and there were shadows gathering round the upholstery of King Louis' day. For nearly a minute no one spoke, neither I, nor Fanchonette standing behind her mistress's chair, nor the grim lady herself waiting an answer so solemnly. Madame has been traveling no doubt, I suggested.

"Right," said madame, "we have been traveling wearily: scouring the great continent of Europe from end to end. Poor Fanchonette is tired, and I am tired. Does monsieur"—here she stooped forward, peering nervously into my face—"does monsieur ever recollect meeting—in any of the great public places, for instance—a man with light yellow mustache, white teeth, and a false smile? Let monsieur see his description, as officially drawn up, with proper *signalement*. Eyes, gray; nose, arched; height, medium; hair, yellow; and the rest of it. We have been traveling after him, monsieur."

I was now beginning to understand.

"Well," she went on, "we were hunting that shadow up and down, tracking

those yellow mustaches hopelessly, without aid from anyone, for how long, Fanchonette? Ah, for three years—yes! At the end of three years, monsieur—three weary years—we had hunted him down—tracked him home. It was time, though, full time. We had not strength for much more, Fanchonette?"

"Where did you find him then, madame?" I said.

"Ah! where? Why, in a lonely German town, at the foot of the mountains. But what use was it? We had no friends among the great ones, and could not lay a finger on him in that foreign country. All that was left to us was to keep watch over him until he should be drawn back again by his destiny—as they say such men are always drawn—to his own country. How long did we keep watch over him, there, Fanchonette?"

"For ten months, madame."

"For ten months, and then he departed, as I knew he would, and crept back to his own land. And now," she said, lowering her voice in a whisper, "he is close by us here—in the town of Dezières, not five miles away—"

Madame paused here for a moment, still playing feverishly with the smooth knob of her chair.

"Here is what we would ask of you, if you would not think it too much. Fanchonette has been into this town and has brought back some idle story about its not being the man; no false smile, she says, nor yellow mustaches—as if he were fool enough to keep such tokens. *Mon Dieu!*" she added, lifting up her thin hands, "it shall turn out to be he, and no other. He is lying at this moment in Dezières, awaiting his hour."

"In what way, then, dear Madame, would you have me assist you?"

"Fanchonette does not know this man, and my poor eyes are old and weak and would not help me to know him. See us here, then, monsieur, two friendless women, and give us this help. Go into that town, see him, speak with him, probe his very soul, and if he turn pale have them ready to rush in upon him. How were we to compass such things?"

I could only promise that I would set forth for Dezières, not that Saturday night—it being far too late—but toward noon the next day, when she might depend on my best exertions. I was touched by the poor lady's sorrows and her pale, handsome countenance, so worn and sharpened with sorrows. It was hard to resist the piteous, earnest look, with which she had waited for my answer.

"A troubled time you must have had of it, my poor girl," I said to Fanchonette, as we went down to the door.

"Ah, yes, monsieur"; she said, "but we would have traveled to the world's end to find him. I have no fears. The *Bon Dieu* will deliver him up to justice yet."

The next day was Sunday, and a very bright festival morning it seemed to be. Looking betimes from my little casement, I saw the whole town astir, and, in the street making toward the church where was to be, presently, the grand mass. They came in all manner of costumes: abundance of high white caps, and bright shawls and petticoats variegating the tide. There were some, too, from the country outside, drawn

along by stout horses, adorned with gay harness and fringes. There were stout patriarchs trudging along, boldly leaning on their good sticks, and young girls—the Maries and Victorines of last night—with gold pins in their hair and great bouquets, and gallants in blouses walking beside them. So they went by; all bound for the grand mass. I would go to the grand mass also.

High altar abundantly decked with artificial white roses; little altars in little by-chapels decked also with artificial white roses. White roses around the capitals of the tall, gray pillars. White roses along the organ-gallery, and around the angels, and on the head of the pretty statue of our Lady, or it might be of our saint and patroness, in the middle of the aisle. This was the first impression upon the senses of the curious stranger. The secret of this waste of white roses was this: is was the patroness's festival-day, and, on looking closer, I found that very many of the bouquets had, in fact, found their way to the feet of her effigy. There was to be a grand function, in short, and it was confidently expected that *M. le grand vicaire-général* of the district would come expressly and celebrate the patroness in a panegyric; but a little doubt hung over this prospect. There was altogether a bright, innocent aspect about the church interior as I stood looking down at it from the porch, so well peopled with its ranks of gaily-dressed peasantry, which struck me as another of those choice pictures for which I was indebted to this little place. There was a tall man in a cocked-hat who was overpowering in his attentions, unprompted by mercenary motives. When the grand mass began, a flood of boys in white, a flood of men in white, together with a train of lay figures, displaying upon their backs the gorgeous copes lent by adjoining parishes to do honor to the patroness, and now *M. le curé* himself, celebrant in a dazzling robe, never seen by Monceaux eyes—fresh from Paris—censers, floating clouds, gold, silver, flitter, torches, and sweet fragrance—that was the function. Alack, for the music, though chanted, indeed, with a will, but dissonant, and of the nose nasal. Nor can I restrain a gentle remonstrance against the leathern spiral instrument—that cruel disenchanter—worked with remorseless vigor by the Tubal Cain of the place. At the end of the function—when the patroness is happily borne back to her resting-place—comes a moment of intolerable suspense. Has *M. le grand-vicaire* come? Will he come? In a moment more there is sensation in the church, for there issue forth boys in white, the men in white, the lay figures even; and, lastly, walking modestly with *M. le curé, M. le grand-vicaire* himself. He has come, then, the long desiderated! A rather florid, portly man, *M. le grand-vicaire,* but true as steel, and has come twenty miles that morning for the patroness and her flock. He will dine with *M. le curé* in state, and meet the *maire* and other great syndics. A very excellent sermon from *M. le grand-vicaire,* full of sound truths, with a little varnish of a Paris accent over all. For, he is not provincial, and hath eminent prospects of being a bishop, and those not so remote either. A great day altogether—a very high festival!

Shortly after noontide. a sort of

calèche sent over from Dezières, departed by the northern side of the town. There were, inside of that *calèche,* Madame Lemoine, Mademoiselle Fanchonette, and myself. After all, madame had decided, almost at the last minute, to go forward to Dezières and wait there the progress of events.

In about an hour's time then, we were struggling slowly up the paved causeway that leads into that town: a much greater and more imposing place than Monceaux.

There is a *barrière* and there are officials there, and *octroi;* at which spot we turned sharply to the right, making for a quiet and retired house of rest, known as the Son of France Inn. At the Son of France were set down madame and her attendant, whilst I went off on foot to the Three Gold Crowns, on certain business of my own.

At the door of the house of entertainment I made inquiries in an easy unconcerned manner: firstly, as to the hour they were accustomed to lay out their table-d'hôte, and also as to whether I could be accommodated with an apartment for that night. It was explained to me that, on the score of dinner, I was unhappily too late for the first table-d'hôte, which was laid always at one, precisely. But that, by infinite good luck, there would be another laid at five o'clock, to suit the convenience of strangers arrived for the festival. As to the apartment I might have my choice; for *garçon* candidly acknowledges there are not many stopping in the house. "Bad times these for business," I say, laughingly. "Confess, in all honor, have you half-dozen people in your house?" Indeed he can assure monsieur that there are at least that number—or very nearly so. No, I say, pointing significantly to the keys hung close by—about three thick—who have you now? Why, there was M. Petit the *avocat,* and *M. le sous-lieutenant,* and now, let him see—oh, yes! There was M. Falcon—not exactly stopping in the house; and there was M. Rabbe, professor of languages and belles-lettres, and—Well, well, I say, so that any of them dined, I was content. O, yes, they would dine: monsieur might depend on that. M. Rabbe always dined. Good. Then I would be there at five.

I am interested in M. Rabbe, professor of languages and belles-lettres. I am desirous of meeting M. Rabbe at dinner, and making his acquaintance. I walk up the street carelessly, thinking what manner of man he may turn out to be, when I am seized unaccountably with misgivings on the score of my passport. My passport, of all things in the world! Was it perfectly *en règle,* as their phrase was? Had it its full complement of visas, and sand, and stamps? Would it do for such remote quarters as Dezières? Who was to let me know concerning these things? I stop a passer-by, and inquire with civility for the Bureau of Passports. The passer-by is puzzled—not often coming in contact with such notions—he supposes I may hear of it at the Police. Yes; and the Police? Ah! that was in Rue Pot d'Etain—Tin Pot Street that is—straight as I can go. Thanks. One thousand thanks!

I proceed, straight as I can go, into Tin Pot Street and discover the Police at once from the sign of a gendarme hung out, as it were, at the door. Two other gendarmes are seated on a little

bench under the window, enjoying the evening. I go up to the Sign, and ask if I may be allowed a few minutes' conversation with *M. le chef*. He looks hard at me, moving his hand over his chin with a rasping sound. Then, with a slow glance, he takes me in from head to foot, and under pretext of picking up a straw, contrives a private view at my back. The brethren on the bench have by this time drawn near, look me all over, and make rasping sounds on their chins. I repeat my request of being conducted to the presence of *M. le chef*. Upon which the Sign—clearly not knowing what to make of it—motions me to follow, and leads me into a little back room. The door is shut, and I am left alone with a gentleman behind a table—bald and rather full in person—wearing a traveling cap tied with a bow of ribbon in front, and an ancient brown coat: altogether recalling forcibly the men that used to book you in country towns for the Royal Mail, during the fine old coaching times.

I have some curious conversation with *M. le chef:* for nearly half an hour. In spite of Royal Mail associations, I find him a man of wonderful tact and knowledge. Indeed, how would he have got there at all were it otherwise? Strange to say, he has shown me some queer notes of his own making during the last two or three days. As I go away it seems settled that *M. le chef* will not dine at home that day; but has taken a fancy for trying the *cuisine* at the Three Gold Crowns. He will dine much about the time we do, only he will be served in a little *Cabinet Particulier* by himself. I am grieved at not having his company at the public table; for he is a man of wit and easy manners. But he had his little oddities, he says, and so shrugs me out.

At about ten minutes before five, I am ascending the stairs of the Three Gold Crowns. I find the lieutenant already there before me, walking up and down—gentlemen of the Imperial Service proving, within my experience, punctual and fatal patrons of the proprietors of such establishments. We salute each other profoundly, and enter upon the probabilities of there being full or scanty attendance at the approaching meal. To us entered presently a purple, orb-faced gentleman, plainly of the country interest and Squire Western habits, and then a little smart man, who recalled forcibly the popular portraits of M. Thiers. He seems, as it were, perpetually shooting out into points and angles, and comes in company with the gentleman of the country, laying out some local interest energetically with his pointed finger.

Behind them walks out the host of the Three Gold Crowns, heralding the soup—significant omen that no more are to come or at least be waited for. But the professor of modern tongues and belles-lettres, where is he? I am so interested in this coming of M. Rabbe, that I feel myself getting troubled and uneasy in mind, and look every instant toward the door—more especially as I know from sounds behind the partition that there is a gentleman being served in private—contingent, as it were, upon M. Rabbe's arrival. Perhaps M. Rabbe may have private reasons for not desiring to meet me? Seriously I am very much disturbed, and think anxiously of the thin,

pale lady expectant at the Son of France.

The soup then is put on. Officious *garçons* bustle about, and the clatter of chinaware and tongues sets in. M. Petit—for I have learnt long since that M. Thiers' portrait stands for him—talks for the whole company. He has his sharp forefinger laid upon his neighbor's chest; now upon his plate; now vertically upon his own palm. He is forever illustrating things with little constructions of his knife and fork, his napkin and his chair. He distracts me from what I am thinking of so nervously. The *sous-lieutenant* and M. Falcon accept him cheerfully as he is—and without reply—for their souls are now laid conscientiously to the great work before them.

Just as the soup is being taken away, I catch the sound of a distant step upon the stairs. Our host catches it too; for he bids Antoine stay his hand, and leave the soup for M. Rabbe. For another moment my heart is beating hard, and there enters someone bowing low, and full of soft apologies—a little warm, too, with the haste he has made and wiping his forehead with his handkerchief. Ah, Fanchonette! For all that artificial strip of baldness reaching even to the back of the head; in spite of those shorn lips and cheeks; of that limp neck-cloth, swathed in many folds and brought down upon the chest; of that bunch of seals; and the long black garment a shade seedy at the collar; I say you should have known M. Rabbe, in one second, at the comely German town! I would have picked him out of a thousand.

He was one of M. Petit's own circle of friends; for that gentleman saluted him heartily as he took his seat. A very agreeable man was M. Rabbe, and entertained us wonderfully for the rest of dinner, excepting that at times he had a peculiar manner of displaying his teeth, and I could not help fancying a yellow mustache just over them. He spoke cheerfully of the morning's function, and of the admirable sermon of *M. le vicaire*—such a plain, sound doctrine, and so good for the people! Then he falls upon fiscal questions with M. Petit, handling them with a certain skill. The lieutenant is, all this while, too hard at work for mere converse.

At last M. Petit, looking at his watch, discovers that he has important business elsewhere, and so departs with a bow that takes in all the company. The lieutenant rises about the same time, bethinking him of the little café in the Square of the town. Remain, therefore, the country interest, myself, and M. Rabbe, who says with a pleasant smile that he knows of a particular Volnay, now lying in our host's cellars, and would take leave to order up some, for our special tasting. At this moment there are sounds of movement behind the partition, and presently enters with bows, my friend the *chef,* with newspaper in one hand, and his glass and slim wine-flask in the other, begging to be allowed to join the company. I confess I scarcely know *M. le chef* again. He is strangely metamorphosed, having now got up a little of the aspect of a town burgher in his Sunday suit: with a brusque local tone of speech. No traces here of the brown garment and the ancient traveling cap! He draws in his chair, looks round on us

cheerfully, and I now feel that the time for business is at hand.

"You do meet excellent wines"—I say, in continuation of the Volnay discussion—"in some of those little towns up and down the country."

"Ay," says *M. le chef,* holding his glass to the light, "and perhaps nowhere so good as in this town of ours."

"The gentleman is right," says M. Falcon, with an oath of the true western fashion—only in French—"let them match our wines if they can! *Pardieu!* I say what is known, and can be proved!"

"He has reason!" *M. le chef* says, glancing at me ever so little. "Trust to a clean country cabaret for pure honest wines!"

"Yes," I reply, "I have traveled over many leagues of France, and I think the best wines I have fallen in with, were at an old cabaret in the south."

"Where, if I may take the liberty?" *M. le chef* asks with interest.

"Let me see," I answered reflecting, "it is so long since—Ah, to be sure—down near Troyes somewhere, at a house called the Yellow Tiger!"

M. Rabbe was about to drink when I began this speech. At the moment the words Yellow Tiger were spoken, his glass was not an inch from his lips. He started. His arm shook so violently, that the wine ran over his glass. Then he swallowed it all off—every drop, with a gulp—hastily to hide his white lips, and stole a cowering look round the table, just catching *M. le chef* in the act of leaning forward with his hands upon his knees, watching him with intense curiosity.

"What are you all looking at me for in this way?" he said angrily.

"We are concerned for monsieur's health," says the chef, "lest he should be seized with sudden sickness. That name of Yellow Tiger seemed to have such strange effect."

M. Rabbe looks at him uneasily for a moment; then laughs more uneasily still, and fills out for himself another bumper of Volnay.

"To go back to this Yellow Tiger wine," says *M. le chef,* reaching over for the flask, "was it so good now, really?"

"Famous! And I ought to remember it well. For the night I drank of it there was murder done in the Yellow Tiger Inn!"

Again M. Rabbe's glass was stayed in its course, and the precious Volnay scattered on the floor. He was looking over at me with a painful, devouring expression, which I shall never forget.

"Monsieur must be unwell," says *M. le chef,* with anxiety; "the gentleman will recollect that I said so at first."

"I am very unwell," gasps M. Rabbe, staggering up on his feet, and not taking his eyes from me, "very unwell indeed. I shall go out into the fresh air, it will revive me."

"The thing of all others in the world," *M. le chef* says; "nothing is so good as the cool fresh air, with a little eau de Cologne to the temples. Stay," says *M. le chef,* rising with good-natured alacrity, "let monsieur lean on me, till he gets to the garden. He is weak evidently. Oh, there is nothing like the cool air!"

So *M. le chef* gets monsieur's arm

under his own. They go out together, and *M. le chef* gives me one queer look from over his shoulder.

That evening it fell out that a strong party of gendarmes, with bayonets fixed and drawn closely round a handcuffed man, came past the Son of France Inn. There, a tall thin lady in black stood at a front window. It was nearly certain, I was informed, that the destiny of the handcuffed man would be solved at the *Bagnes* or galleys at Brest.

Master Huldebrand

THE concert-room in the palace was a very fine place, all florid gilding and painting, and on the night in question it was crammed to overflowing; all the Court was present, and those of the townsfolk important enough to have received invitations, together with the nobles of the land who had travelled from far and wide to see their Prince married, every one in his very best clothes, and as ugly a lot as you could see.

In the front row of all, on three gold and velvet armchairs, sat, first, our benign Prince, then Adolphus Frederick, resplendent in all his orders, and his wig in such beautiful big curls that it was fine to see; and on his left Seraphina Sophia, in a robe of pale green satin sewn with pearls, and her hair powdered high above her head, and two such red cheeks that the Archduke could not take his eyes off them, so highly did he approve of their healthy appearance. But for all that, they came from the rouge-pot, as any one who knew our Princess in her simple home-life could have told him at a glance.

Punctually as the clock struck eight, the Royal party made its appearance, and at the selfsame moment Master Huldebrand stepped on to the platform. He looked paler than ever in his sombre purple velvet suit, and his eyes burned like live embers under his beetling brows. He came forward and made his bow, looked straight at the Princess, who cast down her eyes, and then seating himself at the clavier began to play.

On the programme it was said that he would begin by a sonata of Glück's, but even as he struck the first few notes I knew that no composer living or dead had written them, but that they came straight from our master's broken heart. As he once played to his Princess the day he heard the news of her betrothal, so he now played to her again for the last time. And we hung on his fingers, breathless, for he ravished us into a very ecstasy of melody such as was never heard before, save once, or will be again in this world.

How long it lasted I never knew, whether one hour or more, or whether it was less. It seemed like a minute, and yet as if one had been listening to it for centuries, and that it must go on eternally, so beautiful was it. It was sad, sad as life and sad as death, with such an unutterable wail of misery and yearning that I thought my heartstrings were cracking with the pity of it; it was sweet as the song of the nightingale in the moonlight, and the scent of

the honeysuckle in the heat of the day; it was stormy, it rose and fell in ever-recurring waves of sound as the ocean beats against the rocks in a tempest.

And there was no end to the changes in it. Now a song of love so seductive and tender as to stir even my withered old heart, now a lament so piteous and keen that the tears ran down my cheeks before I knew my folly. Once the master's fingers, speeding like a hurricane over the keys, drew from them a sort of savage dance of inexpressible weirdness, broken by a battery of short strange chords like bursts of demoniac laughter.

Surely never was instrument in the hands of such a fiend of inspiration before. In truth our master was like one possessed; as he played he swayed from side to side, his long, lank hair, half unpowdered, escaped from its ribbon, and hung grey around his countenance. Every second he grew whiter and whiter, more wan, more wild, more haggard, and now and then one would almost have thought that he was battling in desperate frenzy with some ghastly, invisible spirit that drove him on despite himself.

But all at once a happier mood seemed to come over him, a series of tender modulations replaced the madness of his improvisation, and he gradually broke into a glorious strain, full of such solemn triumph and extraordinary gladness that all knew it could be nothing but a wedding march. And the Prince and the Archduke and all the audience, who had been not a little disturbed and astounded by the foregoing, now began to nod their heads and smile to each other, relieved to be free from the uncomfortable tension which had held them; this they could understand; this was something like.

"Ya, ya, so it goes!"

But as the wedding march went on, gathering, as it were, more joy and more grandeur bar by bar, there crept, in some amazing and bewildering way, into its harmonies, one solemn note of woe, ever the same and ever recurring like the toll of a funeral bell. And I cannot tell you the weird and depressing effect of that note in the midst of the gladness, nor the gloom it seemed to cast over us all. And the gay strains grew faint and perplexed, with an increasing plaintiveness about them, hurried, uncertain, groping—and the mournful note tolled on, louder and louder, till it drowned all else with its frightful persistent, melancholy warning, and I felt a shiver run down my spine, and only that I was sitting amongst those dolts of Hassauers, should have stretched out my hand for a grasp of something warm and human.

Now, as I looked around, I saw nothing but white faces, eyes goggling and mouths gaping, so that it was clear to me I was not singular in my impressions. Only the Archduke went on beating time and nodding his head as he had done at the beginning of the march, and I do not think he noticed how his wedding music had grown into a funeral dirge.

Well, suddenly the Princess stood up from her seat, straight and rigid, pressed her hands to her left side, and calling out with a wild cry of pain:

"My heart, my heart!" fell fainting into her father's arms.

Oh, there was a hurry-scurry! Everybody standing up and pressing forward, advising, condoling, discuss-

ing, one louder than the other. A great breach of Court etiquette, to be sure, but then they were all delighted with the sound of their own voices again after the spell our master's wild genius had laid on them. (And yet I heard those Hassauers declare that there was nothing admirable about our artist at all, and his playing but a scrimmage over the notes. *Na,* so they are made in the north.)

Our sweet Princess was carried to her room, and the doctors were in instant attendance. The Archduke was put out—extremely so; he feared he might have been taken in after all, and that her health was not what an Archduchess's should be. But the doctors were able to reassure him completely. It was nothing—a mere passing weakness; the emotion, the music, the natural feelings of a maiden on such an occasion, all this explained the accident most satisfactorily. Why, a bride-elect who did not faint before the wedding would be something quite incorrect, after all.

And the master? The master had slipped away in all the bustle, and was back in his little room alone. He was only half conscious of what he was doing, and some think he was then already in a fever, and that what he had played was a very delirium of music. And this, they say, further explains the surpassingly curious events that followed, and which, according to them, never happened at all, and were merely the phantasies of his disordered brain.

But it is a free world, and one need agree with no one; that is the comfort of it; so, as for me, I keep my opinion. But this, whether dream or reality, was what happened to Master Huldebrand that night.

It was towards midnight; all the town was quiet, and he was sitting still at his window in the little inn room thinking; whether awake or asleep none can say for certain. A tallow candle with a great long wick was burning on a table behind him, so that I suppose he could have been seen from the street. The wind was wild and cold, and the rain was falling.

Now he heard some one call him from beneath his window. It was a woman's voice, pitched in a low and cautious key, and yet with such urgency in its tones that it struck on the master's ear as loud as a brazen trumpet.

"Master Huldebrand, Master Huldebrand!"

The master arose in haste, and opening the casement, put forth his head into the driving rain.

A slim figure, whose face looked up at him white and anxious from the dark wrappings about her head, and which he vaguely saw was that of a young woman, stood just before the house.

"For God's sake," she cried, in the same subdued yet passionate manner, "come with me; come at once; the Princess has sent for you."

Now how the master got down the stairs and out of the door, who knows? but all I can tell you is, that at the sound of his mistress's name he felt a sudden madness. And the next minute found him in the wet, cold street, hurrying over the slimy stones, slipping, stumbling, but ever rushing onward by the side of the veiled figure, who skimmed along like the wind, pull-

ing impatiently at his sleeve, as if she would have him speed yet faster.

Presently he knew that they turned through a narrow gate into a gravelled walk, where dripping tendrils of creeping plants splashed across his face as he passed; that from this they came to a place where his guide stopped him and bade him, in a fierce whisper, tread cautiously or they were lost, and then they went down steps into the ground.

Down they went, some dozen steps or so, into a level flagged passage, where they groped their way onwards by the damp clammy walls; and, again, up steps of stairs so narrow, so abrupt, so winding, that as the master mounted, he grew quite giddy and exhausted, and thought they would never stop.

All at once a tiny ray of light filtered through the gloom, and then the mysterious messenger stopped him.

"Go in, in God's name," she said, and he thought she was weeping; "and may no evil come of this night's work."

The wall gave way under her touch, and the master found himself in a vast and spacious room, full of gentle light, fragrance, and warmth. And there—oh merciful Heaven!—on a couch, looking at him with sweet, eager, longing eyes, lay the Princess—*his* Princess—and she was all in white, like an angel, and her hands were pressed to her heart.

Slowly she stretched out her arms to him; then—surely it must have been a dream—the poor musician found himself upon his knees beside her, and she was clasping him by the neck.

"Oh, master," she said, over and over again, "you have broken my heart; oh, master, tell me the music."

And as he was silent in his bewilderment, and faint from awe and rapture, and did not answer, not knowing what she meant, she cried again, piteously, with a wail:

"Tell me the music, tell me the music!"

There came a sort of blank over him from which he awoke to find himself in a strange and exquisite maze of happiness.

His arms were round his Princess, her head was on his shoulder, his eyes were drowned in hers in an unutterable ecstasy of passion. And he was telling her—though he knew not how, nor what words he spoke, no more than he had known the notes he had played—the master was telling her his love.

And presently he felt her sweet arms flag and flag as they clasped him; and her fair head slip away from his shoulder; the exquisite burden of her form grew heavier and heavier in his embrace; and then something drew his head down, and his lips to meet hers, and all was oblivion save that he thought he was floating away on the music of heaven.

How long it lasted he could not count, when a sigh from the lips beneath his aroused him, and all at once those lips struck him with a sudden chill; laying her gently down on the couch, he raised himself to look.

What was this? What was this? How cold, and still, and white! Help, help; the Princess! Ah, my God! What was this?

Someone shrieked wildly behind him; there came a veil before his eyes, a surging in his ears, and a swaying of the ground on which he stood. And loudly the tolling note that had haunted his wedding march began to boom and

boom in his head. Then grasping hands dragged him into darkness, and there came a nightmare of steps, down and down in frightful dizzy descent, a hideous vista of interminable streets, and a fiend that drove him ever onwards; and again the tolling note in his head, so that he felt his brain bursting with the noise of it, and ran wildly to escape.

After this unconsciousness.

. . . . .

When Master Huldebrand returned once more to sentient being, he was lying on his narrow bed in his little inn room, to which he had retired after the concert. And it was already late in the morning, for the sun was streaming in through the window in broad level rays, and the whole air was filled with the hum of the busy working town. The master lay for a moment or two wondering what was this weight of sorrow at his heart. Then he remembered it was the morning of the Princess' wedding day; and as it was borne in upon him, the master turned over on his side, away from the light, that he might sleep to his misery.

But there was something irritating, something disturbing that would not let him rest. A monotonous mournful sound coming at slow intervals with maddening, hateful regularity.

The bell, the bell, that doleful, dreadful bell striking the air, vibrating, lingering, dying away, then again, and again, and again. Oh, God, he was going mad!

This knell that rang in his music last night, that haunted his dreams, that was inextricably mixed up with the wild, sweet, fearful memories now confusedly crowding back on him with each moment of fuller wakefulness; this knell that seemed to fall on a raw nerve, to send a quivering shoot of pain through his frame at every stroke, would it never be silent?

Yes, yes, he had gone mad, there could be no doubt of that.

He sat up in bed bathed in a cold sweat, and drove in frenzy his fingers into his ears. Behold! the bell ceased. With a new terror on him, he drew them out and listened, and there was the tolling again.

It was reality, then; his anguish redoubled, and though he knew not why, he shook with a great fear.

Now, as he sat and strained his ear to the hollow sound, there came a bustling and stirring in the next room, and looking he saw his door was ajar.

"God-a-mercy!" cried a woman's voice from the room within, fat and jovial, "I have not yet recovered from the turn I got this morning. Figure to thyself, Trude—I go to the door for the milk, and there lies the Herr just as if he were dead, sopping and soaking with the rain, his face turned up to the sky as white as a cream cheese. You could have knocked me over with a breath."

"Herr je!" came another voice in thinner accents, in a pause emphasized by a clatter of crockery, "and was he dead then?"

"God preserve!" cried the first with a shriek, "no, no, the poor gentleman was but in a faint! I think he had a little bit of fever in the night, and wandered out not knowing what he was doing. My man and I we carried him in and laid him in bed, and when last I looked in he was sleeping like a lamb. So long as he does not fall ill on my

hands! . . . But as I was saying, it quite upset me, and now this bell with its tolling instead of the joy-bells for the wedding—just as I was about to start for the procession too. *Na,* knowest thou? I like it not. It is to me as if something had happened."

Master Huldebrand still sat up listening, and that so intently, it seemed as if all his strength and will had passed into the one faculty.

There came a tramp, tramp on the wooden stairs, and a call in a man's rough voice:

"Fraüchen, Fraüchen, hast heard the news? The Princess Seraphina was found dead in her bed this morning."

The musician fell back on his pillow, and lay staring straight up at the ceiling.

"Well—well, 'tis all for the best perchance; you see, our Archduke had need of a healthy wife!"

"So somebody was saying."

The master began to laugh and hug himself. The Princess was dead; she would never be the Archduke's bride—oh, that was grand!

But then came the bell again. How sad it was, how terrible in its unchangeable note! "Dead, dead—dead!" it seemed to say.

Dead!

He saw her cold and white and straight, her young face set in the eternal age of death, and bandaged with an awful white bandage; and she had one stiff hand on her broken heart. That's what she died of, of course—the master knew all about it; he had broken it, and he ought to know.

"Dead, dead, dead!" shrieked the bell, and

"Dead, dead, dead," shrieked the master; and louder and louder came the tolling, till it filled the whole room with a mighty clamor, till the air became alive with the ringing, and the whole world was one great sound. Master Huldebrand rolled on the bed, and drew the pillows over his ears; in vain—he could not shut it out. He fell on his knees and prayed; he fought with it, and tried to beat it away, but all to no avail.

Then he found out something so terrible that the hair stood up on his head with the horror of it. And this was that he was the bell, he himself, unhappy man, and that he would have to toll on for ever. This was the Princess' wish because the music had killed her.

And howling he ran out into the street.

. . . . .

Ah, well! our poor master—he was a great genius, but that was the end of it all. The Hof Doctor says he was always a little mad, and that even his music was against all reason; but he never said that to me twice, for it was more than I could hear from any man.

Ah, he is a loss to us indeed! No one ever played as he did.

They tell me he is a hopeless lunatic, and keeps on fancying himself a bell, which is an odd fancy; if he had thought himself a clavier, you know, 'twould have seemed more natural. His sufferings have been terrible, but now he is quieter and more contented. Of late he has begun to believe that he is ringing for a wedding, which somehow appears to please him. I am told, however, he cannot live another year.

A Tale of Jack Freelove

JACK FREELOVE, who was a fellow of whim, made love to one of those ladies who throw away all their fondness upon parrots, monkeys, and lapdogs. Upon going to pay her a visit one morning, he wrote a very pretty epistle upon this hint. Jack was conducted into the parlor, where he diverted himself for some time with her favorite monkey, which was chained in one of the windows; till at length observing a pen and ink lie by him, he writ the following letter to his mistress, in the person of her monkey; and upon her not coming down so soon as he expected, left it in the window and went about his business. The lady soon after coming into the parlor, and seeing her monkey look upon a paper with great earnestness, took it up and to this day is in some doubt—says Will—whether it was written by Jack or the Monkey:

"Madam—Not having the gift of speech, I have for a long time waited in vain for an opportunity of making myself known to you; and having at present the convenience of pen, ink, and paper by me, I gladly take the occasion of giving you my history in writing, which I could not do by word of mouth:

"You must know, Madam, that about a thousand years ago I was an Indian Brachman, and versed in all those mysterious secrets which your European philosopher, called Pythagoras, is said to have learned from our fraternity. I had so ingratiated myself by my great skill in the occult sciences with a Dæmon whom I used to converse with, that he promised to grant me whatever I should ask of him. I desired that my soul might never pass into the body of a brute creature; but this he told me was not in his power to grant me. I then begged that into whatever creature I should chance to transmigrate, I might still retain my memory, and be conscious that I was the same person who had lived in different animals.

"This he told me was within his power, and accordingly promised, on the word of a Dæmon, that he would grant me what I desired. From that time forth I lived so very unblamably that I was made President of a College of Brachmans—an office which I discharged with great integrity till the day of my death.

"I was then shuffled into another human body, and acted my part so well in it that I became First Minister to a Prince who lived upon the banks of the Ganges. I here lived in great honor for several years, but by degrees lost all the innocence of the Brachman, being obliged to rifle and oppress the people to enrich my sovereign; till at length I became so odious that my master, to recover his credit with his subjects, shot me through the heart with an arrow as I was one day addressing myself to him at the head of his army.

"Upon my next remove I found myself in the woods under the shape of a Jackal, and soon lifted myself into the service of a lion. I used to yelp near his den about midnight, which was his time of rousing and seeking

after his prey. He always followed me in the rear, and when I had run down a fat buck, a wild goat, or a hare, after he had feasted very plentifully upon it himself, would now and then throw me a bone that was half-picked, for my encouragement; but upon my being unsuccessful in two or three chases, he gave me such a confounded grip in his anger that I died of it.

"In my next transmigration I was again set upon two legs, and became an Indian Tax-gatherer; but having been guilty of great extravagances, and being married to an expensive jade of a wife, I ran so cursedly in debt that I durst not show my head. I could no sooner step out of my house but I was arrested by somebody or other that lay in wait for me. As I ventured abroad one night in the dusk of the evening, I was taken up and hurried into a dungeon, where I died a few months after.

"My soul then entered into a flying fish, and in that state I led a most melancholy life for the space of six years. Several fishes of prey pursued me when I was in the water, and if I betook myself to my wings, it was ten to one but I had a flock of birds aiming at me. As I was one day flying amidst a fleet of English ships, I observed a huge Sea-gull whetting his bill and hovering just over my head. Upon my dipping into the water to avoid him, I fell into the mouth of a monstrous shark that swallowed me down in an instant.

"I was some years afterward, to my great surprise, an eminent Banker in Lombard Street; and remembering how I had formerly suffered for want of money, became so very sordid and avaricious that the whole town cried shame upon me. I was a miserable little old fellow to look upon, for I had in a manner starved myself, and was nothing but skin and bone when I died.

"I was afterward very much troubled and amazed to find myself dwindled to an Emmet. I was heartily concerned to make so insignificant a figure, and did not know but some time or other I might be reduced to a mite, if I did not mend my manners. I therefore applied myself with great diligence to the offices that were allotted to me, and was generally looked upon as the notablest ant in the whole molehill. I was at last picked up, as I was groaning under a burden, by an unlucky cock-sparrow that lived in the neighborhood, and had before made great depredations upon our commonwealth.

"I then bettered my condition a little, and lived a whole summer in the shape of a Bee; but being tired of the painful and penurious life I had undergone in my last two transmigrations, I fell into the other extreme and turned Drone. As I one day headed a party to plunder a hive, we were received so warmly by the swarm which defended it that we were for the most part left dead upon the spot.

"I might tell of many other transmigrations which I went through: How I was a Town Rake, and afterward did penance in a bay Gelding for ten years; as also how I was a Tailor, a Shrimp, and a Tom-tit. In the last of these my shapes I was shot in the Christmas holidays by a young Jackanapes, who would needs try his new gun upon me.

"But I shall pass over these, and several other stages of life to remind you of the young Beau, who made love

to you about six years since. You may remember, Madam, how he masked and danced, and sung, and played a thousand tricks to gain you; and how he was at last carried off by a cold that he had got under your window one night in a serenade. I was that unfortunate young fellow whom you were then so cruel to.

"Not long after my shifting that unlucky body, I found myself upon a hill in Ethiopia, where I lived in my present grotesque shape, till I was caught by a servant of the English factory and sent over into Great Britain. I need not inform you how I came into your hand. You see, Madam, this is not the first time you have had me in a chain. I am, however, very happy in this my captivity, as you often bestow on me those kisses and caresses which I would have given the world for when I was a man. I hope this discovery of my person will not tend to my disadvantage; but that you will still continue your accustomed favors to *Your most devoted and humble Servant,*

PUG.

"P. S. I would advise your little Shock-dog to keep out of my way; for, as I look upon him to be the most formidable of my rivals, I may chance one time or other to give him such a snap as he won't like."

By Ford and Flow

CHAPTER I

THE COTTAGE AT THE FORD

AT a point the rough and hilly road abruptly ends. The unaccustomed traveler, who has journeyed thus far through the Hebridean Islands, gazes blankly at the wheel-tracks and foot-marks of the way visibly descending to the edge of the waves, lapping the sandy sea-shore. A waste of waters stretches beyond to the nearest island miles away. No boats are to be seen, only a few cotters' houses peep out between the sand-hills, with a tumble-down hostelry close by. Had there been a direction-post at the last cross-road, it might fitly have borne the inscription, "This is the way to the Sea," for other bourn or destination does not appear, and the road goes straight to the water's edge, as if the horses and carts which have seemingly traveled upon it had gone bodily into the waves. It is only on inquiry that the stranger learns that, after all, this is not the terminus of the road. The way leads further in reality, but only at ebb tide, and at present it is high water. For this is one of the great tidal fords of the Hebrides, connecting two of the islands of the western chain, and, on the level strand, which will be passable in about four hours from now, the traveler may pursue his journey on horseback, or even on foot nearly dry-shod to the southern islands of Benbecula, a straight run of about six miles. There is no alternative meanwhile but to wait. Life in this locality may be summarily comprehended in two main occupations,

waiting till the tide turns to ebb in the first place, speculating in the interval how far it is likely to ebb; and in the second place, running, with all convenient speed, to "catch the ford" before it flows again. Unavoidable delays, in short, and dangerous delays—for there are ebbs, and ebbs—spring and neap tides, variable with westerly winds, and hazardous quicksands midway, perplexing the traveler who ventures the passage without a guide.

There is a strange witchery about this smooth ebbing tide-race, miles in breadth, flowing out to seaward like a river. Its currents set and turn and wheel, bending with each other, without a break or flaw on the oily surface spread with huge eddying swirls freighted with foam-bells and drift weed. For it is calm; there is no wrath in the tide today, only a steady, irresistible set to the westward. Soon, as can be seen from the higher sand-hills of the shore, the central shoals of the ford begin to show above the water, rapid streams around them draining off the dregs of the tide, as if it were the life-blood of the land. Then, in a few hours there is only a firm expanse of billowy sand, in wreath and bank and level floor, ribbed and waterlined with tiny whorls; the flood gone out to seaward so far that, from mid-channel, you can only guess of the waters yet to flow by a gleaming white rim against the sky-line.

If you have a love for color, choose the evening ebb by preference, and stray over those lined and wrinkled sand-flats among the gleaming pools left by the waters, with the western sun lighting up the surface of the shallows, and touching the sea-weed fronts and every sand-grain and water-drop with prism-hues, while the great sea-pools—fathoms deep of amethyst among the shifting sands—are changing and glancing with the dazzling ray in every ripple. This is the land of waters, this great dreamy Uist; full, inland to the Muich, with fresh-water lakes innumerable, and girt with this wide sea-passage filled by the chafing tide. It is jeweled with lakelets in its very sands. Further ashore it is the very region of mystic forgetfulness, with its slumbrous tarns and meres, its treeless solitudes, and the ocean murmur haunting it throughout like a spirit voice. Even its hills are rounded as if in calm, not like Hecla yonder, in the sister island, catching the sun's rays long after the sands are dark, and the low flat isles between are dusk with shadow.

Take the calm and the color of the ford while you may, and stray not far on the treacherous sands, for there is an ominous voice in the western sea tonight, telling of a fierce tide yet to come, when the darkness shall have fallen, and the flood glides up the strand between the night and morning like a dim phantom foam wreathed, and vexed with spray and spin drift. For if there be calm meanwhile, and color and soft outline in this nook of the tide-deserted land, there is an inconstant and wrathful shore out yonder on the verge of the Atlantic—breaking reef and surge for miles of coast line, and over the skerries and shoals of the stretch of ocean to the west, with only the dark hull of St. Kilda breaking the horizon, over the sand hummocks and tidal islets of this endless island shore.

There is one bit of color left which the night-cloud may not dim—and it

may be seen, just now, at the door of Fergus Macrimmon's cottage — the golden glimmer of his daughter Mairi's hair, as she looks up the road, and the breeze stirs a lock, escaped from the banded braid on her white forehead. She is a Hebrid-born girl, but, among the island dwellers, her type of loveliness is rare. Do you know whence it comes? There has been a fusion of races here. There is the original Celtic type, dark-eyed and sallow—slavish and supple in character—but this was leavened long ago by the influx of the daring race which overran these and all the islands of the north and west—and blended with the tribes and races it could not overcome for numbers. The Northman has been here, but the Celtic tongue shows that his individuality was merged. Indistinct the Norse type has become in time. Only now and then a glimpse of it comes out—a characteristic rather than a special feature. Speak to Mairi and you will see it at once—hers are the nineteen years which show it best. If the blue eyes lift to yours, and she speaks in reply, how the face breaks up as if there were music in't—the plastic breathing features changing—like the shot neck of a dove—and kindling with every mood and passion. And yet every moment the countenance has a unity of its own—a face-chord of melody laid there every instant. It is not the white arms, or the lustrous blue eyes alone which lift this simple girl to quiet beauty. It is not her figure which is slight and not over middle height—it is just Mairi's gentle grace altogether—and, most of all, Mairi when she speaks and smiles. It is evidently a more dangerous locality this than ford, or interrupted road, or storm can make it. For the road ends, and the tide flows—and there is the sea—and Mairi, an innocent Siren at its portal. So far does she seem from expecting the visit of a lover at this moment, that the sight of a tall figure striding through the sandhills apparently repels rather than attracts her notice, for she runs quickly into the house, closing the door after her.

Inside, there is only old Fergus; the father and daughter make up the household. He is seated on a low stool before a peat fire, placed, as is the custom here, in the center of the floor. Coming in from the sunlight nothing is to be seen at first but the dull red embers; a small window in the side wall, and a pane of glass let into the thatched roof, are the only openings for daylight. The house, one long apartment, with a low partition midway, is full of shadows—then, through the swirling smoke finding its way out by chinks in the roof and walls, and swayed by the opening of the door, may be dimly descried the old man's gray head, and the outlines of his shrunken form and crippled limbs. He has been nearly worsted in the wars—this veteran—not that he ever fought abroad, but his has been a long, single-handed combat with poverty at home, and the signs of the strife are not awanting. Ever since his wife died he was left with his only daughter; his has been a hard lot.

The old man and Mairi conversed for some time in Gaelic, after the latter's entrance, Fergus asking if the "ebb" was past,—by which he meant the passage of the ford from the south,—and if any one had crossed to Uist.

"Only Donald Cameron, the cate-

chist," replied Mairi; "he is sure to be here after crossing," she roguishly added, it being commonly reported that the individual in question—though a zealous and painstaking man—was not unfrequently actuated in his visits as much by a desire for what he termed "perishing bread," as by the more special duties of his calling. Certainly the cottage close to the ford was tempting to a hungry wayfarer.

"Oh, Mairi, Mairi," sighed her father, "the good man is welcome, yes, indeed! When you come to be as old as I am you will be glad——"

But here the door opened, and the catechist, a tall gaunt man, clad in black, with keen, sharp features set in long gray locks, as if in a frame, put in his head interrogatively.

"Come in, Donald Cameron, and welcome," said Fergus. "Get a chair for the good man, Mairi," he added.

"Fine evening, friends," replied the catechist in Gaelic, slowly entering and closing the door behind him—then advancing and shaking hands with the inmates—"Fine evening, indeed, but O, that ford!" he continued, slowly taking off some of his wrappings, and then, standing beside the seat set for him, "that ford! I have crossed it often, Fergus, but never saw a worse tide. The stream is so dead that it hardly left the long sand, and I had to wade for a good half hour through it, as my sea-boots testify. I think, Mairi, if you can find me an old pair of brogans I'll take these off for an hour, before I go on to Clachan."

"Certainly," said the girl, "I will. Sit down and warm yourself, and I will be making some tea for you."

Not apparently heeding this hospitable offer, but seating himself nevertheless, the catechist began to converse with the old man and, after a little, their speech rose into the high-pitched *falsetto* key which characterizes *serious* conversation in these places; Mairi, in the meanwhile, preparing the humble meal.

"Have you been hearing of 'the work' in the South Isles, Fergus? how it has been growing and prospering?" said the catechist; "meetings after meetings, night after night. Mr. John has been speaking with great effect. O! a blessed work."

"I have heard," replied the old man, lifting his eyes from the fire, and fixing them on the keen, eager face of the other, "I have heard, Donald. I have been told. I hope it is well. But there is need of care, great care," he added, as if by afterthought; and then the faded eyes fell again, and he relapsed into silence.

"O yes!" replied the other, "of course there's need of that too; but, as the ministers were saying to us at Barra, there's such a thing as too much care—over-cautious folk abound—the 'moderates' are cautious. There may be too much hanging-back. We must catch the blessed time before it goes by." Then, seeing he must keep up the conversation himself, he added, *"It's* in the islands now, and it may go from them again. The other day it was not, now it's here. When may it not pass away? Of a truth it is here. I tell you," cried the enthusiast, rising from his seat, with the intensity of his feelings, "I tell you it's here, I saw *it* once, and heard *it;* heard it like the wind among the myrtles, and saw it

like the Pentecostal fire!" He fell back on his seat as if overcome.

There was a long pause. The men evidently did not sympathize with each other. Perhaps the speaker felt he had gone too far. Then old Fergus said very gently:—

" 'The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit.' "

Then he was silent, and, while no one spoke, there came borne on the evening air, now so still that every sound was audible, an awful wail of wind from the seaward; like a formless cry it swelled, and fell, rose again, and died away into a murmur.

"There's a voice in the sea tonight," said Mairi, simply. She had joined the others, and was standing in the firelight, which gleamed and rippled on her loosened hair.

"Young woman," said the catechist, abruptly turning to her, "I hope you are not mocking in what you say. These things are solemn; and it's a poor lesson, if you have learned it from some careless southerner, such as are hereabouts, I learn, to scoff at religion!"

The girl was silent, with downcast eyes. She did not merit the rebuke, but she made no reply.

"Mairi did not mean any harm, I think," said Fergus, quietly. "She was only speaking of the voice of the sea, and that is God's voice, for He speaks now in storm and calm. There is no 'open vision' in these days, but His presence is ever near and close to the believer."

So their talk went on. Only the girl slipped away after a little, and by and by, went to the door, opened it and came out.

It was dark and chill. As she turned the gable of the house, some one stepped up beside her quickly. She uttered an exclamation of surprise. The newcomer, a tall, athletic youth, seized her hand. "Hush, Mairi, it's only a friend—Frank, you know! When are you going to let me have a talk with you? I've been waiting here, for hours."

Then, judging from her silence that her eyes were downcast. "Come, Mairi," he said, "speak to a fellow, won't you?"

She tried to free her hand from his.

"Don't, Mr. Dayrell, don't," she said in fair English; "I'm not company for the like of you, and there's nothing to say, forbye. Why do you come about so late? You don't even come in. And you would, if you really wanted to see us."

It was not encouraging, the young man felt. It was scarcely Fergus's society he sought. And the catechist and he would not have suited each other.

"I'll tell you what it is, Mairi," he said, when having freed her hand she stepped a little back from him, "you are too hard upon me! I'm going away soon, now—going away 'to spend a week in Heisger' (as your song goes), over yonder, after I come back from Benbecula, where I am going to fish tomorrow. Couldn't you come? No answer?—O, I suppose Donal' More wouldn't let you come, eh?"

"Dhomnuil Mhor?" said the girl, laughing in spite of herself, and imitating his southron tongue. "What do you know of Dhomnuil Mhor?" But the dark was kindly, and hid her quick blush from the other's gaze. Then,

springing backward a step or two, she added "Now, sir, do go away, the catechist will be coming out, and he is sure to see you about—good-bye!" and, quickly evading his attempt to grasp her hand again, she passed round the corner, opened the door and disappeared.

The unfavored suitor, left alone in the darkness, was not well pleased. He stayed about the spot for nearly an hour, but the girl did not again come out, and when the door once more opened it was only for the egress of the catechist, at sight of whom the young man quickly vanished in the darkness. He was indeed none other than the "Mocking Southerner," who pointed the frequent moral of the itinerant teacher's admonitions. Shortly afterward he entered the inn close by, and made arrangements to remain there all night, preparatory to crossing the ford, on foot, the following morning. He was in bad humor, and even his host's vaunted "Talisker," the potent manufacture of the veritable "Long John," failed to revive him. He had hoped to have had a flirtation with Mairi, and that the girl herself had contrived to evade. "Confound that fellow Donal' More or whatever they call him," he said, moodily; "to see a lout like that with such a girl!" and then he turned to the "Talisker" once more.

Frank Dayrell had been for the last four months wandering through the island on a fishing tour. He had paid attentions to Mairi at intervals during that time. These had never seemed very welcome, and were less listened to now, apparently, than ever. A plague on Dhomnuil Mhor, wheelwright and fisherman of Clachan-Carnish!

CHAPTER II

THE FLOW OF MINGALAY

THE morning broke roughly, after a night of rain and wind. But, soon after dawn, the wind lulled treacherously, and a dense mist came rolling in from seaward, before a north-westerly breeze. Sometimes the fog-banks lifted, the clouds dispersed, and the wind freshened, then again it lulled, and the mists settled again. To the westward the sea broke heavily. Fergus Macrimmon, early astir outside his cottage door, opined that the weather looked ill. "A good thing," he said, "that the tides were dead, (*i. e.* neap), else there would have been a high flood. A high flood, being on this account objectionable, that it was likely to invade the "lazy-beds" of potatoes adjoining the house, and even at times, the house itself, on these low-lying shores the difficulty is to secure a site safe from the incursions of the waves. But the prospect for the day was not wholly favorable, on account of the "neap;" for there would be "no ford" that day, Fergus said, with the air of a man who knew what he was talking about. It was on Mairi's tongue to say that Mr. Dayrell would not be able to carry out his plan of crossing to Benbecula; but she checked herself in time. How was she to say that he intended to go, without mentioning that he had told her? So this discreet maiden held her peace on this particular subject, and talked only of "the ford" generally, and the chance of anybody. Anybody of course including "Dhomnuil," of whom it was no harm to be thinking.

"No ford, you think, father?"

"None," replied he, decisively, "no

man in his senses would trust a neap, with north-west wind, and there's the mist too! Always raised a heavy sea, did the mist. Any one knowing the ford *well* might cross with a good horse, if it were a life and death errand, but not on foot, O no!"

Now Mr. Dayrell did *not* know the tidal passage—thought Mairi—he had not come on horseback to the ford last night, and horses were not readily to be hired in these places. Could he have gone nevertheless? And for all Mairi could do to banish this question from her thoughts, it would come back upon her, again and again. Though he did not much deserve it, this "mocksome southron" was much more frequently in the girl's thoughts this morning than even his more favored rival. Has he crossed or tried to cross? Would they suffer him to go from the inn with the intention of crossing, or would the people at the inn never inquire whither he intended going? Perhaps he had told no one of his plan except herself. supposing he did go and got into danger, what if he were lost? These ideas were so maddening that at last, old Fergus seated in his chair for the forenoon, she made some vague excuse and slipped away from the house in the direction of the inn. There was no one outside the house at whom she could inquire. This was trying. Suppose the young gentleman in question was still within, what could she say? At last she summoned courage, asked for, and saw the landlord. He didn't know. Thought Mr. Dayrell was still in the house, though he *had* paid his bill. Eventually he made inquiries, and found his guest had departed.

"What do you want to know for, Mairi?" he said, coming back.

"My father—," faltered the girl,—"I mean Mr. Dayrell was passing our house last night, and spoke of going over to Benbecula, and my father thinks it isn't weather for any one to go, at least on foot, and be strange to the way."

"Neither is it weather to go," said mine host, "but of course if he went he went, and if he didn't go, why, then he didn't. I don't know whether he went that way or not. We have enough to do here, all of us, without looking after mad Englishmen with more money than wits. Seems you take an interest in him, though, eh Mairi? Ah lass, lass, what's this?" It was all the return the poor girl got, and she blushed in spite of herself, her denial of any particular interest in the wayfarer, beyond a wish for his safety, only giving point to the landlord's sarcasm.

Part of the way she returned to her home, then stopped irresolutely and thought. The wind was rising, there was no doubt of that—driving the mist off the South Uist hills, and even off the nearer shore, but midway the cloud-fog rested heavily on the ford. It had ebbed for nearly an hour; but she knew full well, that all the outflow today would be slight, with the wind full on the shore and the slow tide. Soon, perilously soon, the flood would return. At last she resolved to make one effort more to see if he had gone, and, if possible, to prevent him, failing that she could do no more. Tying her shawl tightly over her head, she turned from the main road, and ran for the sand-hills, skirting the ford-track of the strand. By a short cut she could anticipate much of the way, and gain a

particular point, at which the track, finally quitting the sandhills, struck out for the open ford. If he had not left the inn very long before now, she would be at that point before him, if indeed he were on the way, and could warn him to return. When she had fairly left the road, she stooped down, took off her heavy shoes, and homespun stockings, and hiding them in a clump of rushes, fled through the sandhills like a fawn.

It was fully half an hour before she reached the wished-for spot, where the ford-track struck off. Five miles as the crow flies to Benbecula at this point, with two deep swollen salt water streams midway, safely to be crossed only at one place. Behind the furthest out of the sandy hillocks she sat down, out of breath, to wait and watch. It seemed, after all, a fruitless chase, for even here the traveler might pass, and be invisible a quarter of a mile away on account of the mist. It was possible, also, that already he might have passed. Long and anxiously she watched. Strange whirling wreaths of smoke-like mist trailed and swept across the level sands, now hovering suspended, spirit-like, in air—light trails and eddies with a puff of wind wheeling in circles—then the dense white cloud, bent down and brooding on the ground, enveloped all. Behind an ominous thunder-roar. Was it the turning of the tide already, or only the last of the ebb-waves? or, neither slack nor flood, the stealthy "snarr" of the waters? A bad tide, in the language of the dwellers by the ford.

At length Mairi's heart began to fail, and she had thoughts of retracing her steps when, on a sudden, the lifting mist revealed something moving across the sands, then instantly fell again and hid it from view. But the figure, whatever it was, was certainly, from the glimpse she obtained of it, going toward the South Island; there was no doubt of that. Passing so late it was madness to attempt the ford. It could be none other than the stranger. Darting from the sandhill the girl ran lightly and quickly in the direction where the figure had been seen. Yes, it was he, without doubt, walking swiftly along toward the mid-channel crossing-place, a fishing basket slung over his shoulder, a light folded rod in one hand. Running till she came within hailing distance, for his back being toward the shore as he went, he did not observe her, the girl at length stopped and called to him, "Come back, Mr. Dayrell, come back!" He stopped at once, as if surprised; then, seeing the girl coming on but slowly, he retraced his steps and met her.

"Mr. Dayrell," she said, before he came up, "you must not go on today, there is no tide to cross with. Father says, you can't wade the mid-streams with the neap."

"Why, Mairi," he said, coming closer to her, "did you really come all the way after me to tell me this?"

"Yes, I did," answered she. "You said, last night, you were going and I thought——"

Here she stopped, guessing that he misinterpreted her already.

"You thought I should be lost, and you came to save? Was that it, Mairi?" he said, smiling. "That was kind of you. But you see, I don't think I will be lost at all, and, indeed, you will come now that you are here and show me

the way. Didn't you come for that, dear?"

"Indeed, sir," said the girl, bridling, "I did nothing of the kind. I only came to warn you, as I would any other, and as for your soft words, please keep them to yourself! But turn back, sir, *do,*" she pleaded, "the ford isn't safe now, and every minute it will be worse." And she entreated him, as if indeed she had a fonder stake at heart. But he would not listen.

"No, no," he said, "I'll go on, and you'll come with me, just a little way, and then you can run back."

"Indeed I will not," she replied, indignantly, "you might take a warning without thinking people think so much of you. But I can't help it, if you won't. I shall go back."

So saying, her cheeks aflame, poor girl, for his words were not pleasant in tone, she left him, and turned for the sandhills again, but by a shorter way than that by which she had come.

He stood irresolute for a moment looking after her. (How the time was flying, and the tide had surely turned!) as if thinking she would return, then went to follow her. A few rapid strides brought him to her side.

"Come with me, Mairi," he said, "come *a'suilish!* I must go, you know. Come!"

By this time she had neared a rapid stream, which, issuing far up the ford, crossed the sands to seaward, cutting a channel for itself. It was little more than ankle-deep, but over-wide to leap. She was about to wade when he came up, then turned, before she dipped her veined feet in the hurrying water.

"Think, shame!" she said, and her eyes filled, "to speak that way to one who only came to warn you!"

He caught her arm, but she swung herself from his grasp and walked steadily across through the water. Then, without turning round, she pursued her way homeward.

He, rather chagrined, for he saw that he had deeply offended her, and being loath to wet his feet, turned and went his way to the south.

Walking in opposite directions the distance between them quickly increased, and after her indignant words, Mairi was too proud to look behind her to see if he followed. But pity at last softened her heart, and she looked backward. He had gone on, apparently, for he was now out of sight in the fog. Now his chance of safety was less than before. Their interview, though only lasting a few minutes, might prove his ruin. Oh! *would* he not turn at the next stream? Safe on her own side of the stream she had just waded, she resolved to follow it down for a little way to see if he would not return at the first difficult crossing-place, half a mile further on. Did she see him make for home again at that stage she could easily avoid meeting him as he returned. But again, if he crossed the first ford and went on to the "long sand"—her heart sank when she thought of that. Following down the stream beside her she might yet catch another glimpse of him. So she went. Long the mist baffled her, though she went far down, every step taking her at a nearer angle to his course. At last, and suddenly, it cleared. Who was that on the other side, half a mile away? Dayrell, walking *to seaward,* as if to meet the waves, and *worse!*—"Great God!" the cry

burst from her lips, "He is going for the Flow of Mingalay!" The fog had deceived him, he had described nearly a quarter of a circle, and his steps were approaching the treacherous quick-sands of the ford.

Instantly, and thinking only of his safety now, she cried aloud, rushing across the turbid stream once more, "Come back, don't go that way!" But he did not hear her and continued walking onward toward his doom. "O God!" shrieked the terrified girl, frantically, running over the sands toward the unconscious man, "He will be lost. Help!" Still her shouts did not reach his ear; he was too far off yet, and too close to his danger. Another step or two and his footing, while on firm, stable sand apparently, yielded beneath him; he stumbled, half fell forward and plunged heavily to the depth of his knees, then, almost instantly, to his waist. It was a "working flow" into which he had fallen; sand and water mixed, with a deceitful surface as of firm ground, a sand-bog of varying depths, spreading for many hundred yards from the spot, and swaying backward and forward, a very witch-broth in its fatal spell.

At first he thought that the footing underneath was firm, even though, as he stood, he was submerged to the waist. But he found his mistake when he tried to extricate himself. Lifting one foot heavily, he put it cautiously forward toward the shore he had stepped from—itself crumbled and treacherous—but only to find that no foot-hold existed round him, save that uncertain one on which he was. The impetus of his stumble had sent him forward some distance; he was far from his last footmark on the firm sand; his rod, which might have helped him, had slipped from his grasp, and lay beyond his reach. Then he saw the girl coming toward him, breathless and pale. Somehow, up to that moment, he had not thought of *danger;* there was some awkwardness perhaps, and some ungraceful floundering to be done in the matter; some cause for laughter on the girl's part. But when he saw Mairi's face, bloodless to the lips, he felt a strange sinking at the heart. He was about to call to her, before she reached the edge, but she took the words out of his mouth.

"Don't stir," she panted hollowly, "keep still, and don't move for God's love; you will sink if you do. I will try what I can."

He looked down at the sand, already at his waist. Was it rising, or was he slowly going down, down? Surely it was not above that button a moment before, and an awful chill crept over him, his lips twitched convulsively.

Meanwhile his would-be rescuer had taken off her tartan shawl, baring her bonny yellow hair in all its wealth, and began, it was no time for words, to tear it up with desperate, trembling hands into strips.

"I'll try to throw this to you," she cried, for he was far beyond arm's length, and the bank broke and fell in whenever she neared it.

"Try, Mairi," he cried, faintly, "I fear I am sinking deeper." Knotting the strips together, with all her strength and speed, she formed at length a rude rope, and, standing on the nearest edge, she tried to throw it to him, weighted at one end with a stone. At first it did not go straight or far enough. Twice she pulled it in, and threw again. Yes, he caught it that time! Would it stand

the strain now, and help to pull him through to the shore? At first it held, but when the strain told heavily upon it, the brave girl pulling on the shore, it parted midway! Another expedient failed also. He tried to loose the strap of his fishing basket from his shoulders, but even that slight effort threatened to sink him deeper. He could do nothing it was evident. The girl was equally powerless to help him. She tried to tear a strip from her wincey dress but could not effect it. And, all the while, the relentless tide creeping upon them both over the sands. Twice she strove, in the hopeless panic now besetting her, to wade to him by some approach less hazardous than another, but it was in vain: he seemed to be on the only piece of steady ground at the bottom, and even that seemed to be deserting him, for he was visibly going deeper down. She only desisted from these attempts by being convinced of their hopelessness, and by his earnest appeals to her not to try. It would have been certain death for her to have ventured in. A strange, delusive hope fired the breast of the struggling victim. "Why not run, Mairi," he said, "and get help, a rope or something from Carnish? I think I could keep up till you came back." He had *forgotten* for the moment, but she had not, and she burst into tears. She did not answer at first, but turned and glanced at the mist-cloud to seaward.

"There is not time," she said.

He also looked in the same direction, a brief look of agony.

"How, how long will it be?" he stammered.

"Less than an hour," she sobbed.

"Save yourself, save yourself, Mairi," he screamed, as the reality came upon his mind. "Run for the shore, you must not wait for me. Your own life is safe yet!" Still she delayed. Her breathing countenance fell, changed, and dropped in the shadow. She might have gone, but she went not, though she knew that between that young life in the grasp of the flow and death there there was not forty minutes clear. And her own? What would it be worth then?

"I will not leave you," she said, quietly and steadily. The fog thickened every moment, all hope of being seen from the shore was gone. Besides they were in a hollow or bend of the sands scarcely visible at any time from the sandhills.

A thought all at once struck her. "I will come back," she said, "immediately. There's no time to go far, but there may be some mussel-gatherers going home from the ebb. Don't move while I am away." So saying she ran quickly down the sands in the direction of the sea, and skirting the edge of the flow. The further she ran down, the louder the surf roared; the lifting mist already revealed the first creaming wave spreading a wreath over the sand. Half an hour to spare? there was not so much by half. It was dead neap, and the tide had fairly turned. The sand was level here, and the first great wave that washed into the flow would—and not a mussel-gatherer to be seen. Save one! blessed be God! There was hope yet!—A long skeleton-figure, half man, half boy, was stooping in the distance, apparently digging in the sands with his fingers, in search of razor-fish, right in front of the advancing tide. Every now and again his task was interrupted

by a furious incoming wave, spreading round him in foam. Starting then to an erect position, and displaying his gaunt limbs clad only to the knees, an old tattered jacket over his shoulders, this waif of the shore sped from place to place on the sands, as the water forced him to retreat. Agile and light he kept pace with the tide, now leaping and caracoling as if out of his senses, which indeed he partially was. Ian Vich Alastair, the "born-natural" of the district, was well versed in the ways of the ford, and might safely linger near the surf, when none other dared. Walking, or running rather, as he habitually did on tip-toe, the calves of his legs, covered with a shaggy "fell" of black hairs, were enormously developed, and the speed with which he could flit over the sands, and swim the strongest currents, was a proverb in the place.

Out of breath with excitement, Mairi screamed as loudly as she could whenever her eyes lit upon this weird figure. He raised his head, shook his elfin locks from his eyes, for cap he never wore, and with a shrill cry raced like a young colt to her side.

"Ian, Ian!" cried Mairi, clutching his arm, for she knew the poor lad was docile and friendly. "Make haste, haste for the flow sand—this side—Mr. Frank has fallen into it. Haste, Ian dear, to save him!"

"In the flow!" shrieked the lad, glancing over his shoulder at the coming waves with a scared look. Then, without another word he fled in the direction she indicated at full speed. She followed, as quickly as she could. When she reached the flow-bank, she found Ian there, his tattered coat slipped off, and busily disentangling a rope from the light basked slung on his back. On this he apparently relied for the rescue of Frank. Alas! his case seemed desperate now, already he had sunk to the armpits, his hands spread out on the pitiless flow, helpless and weak, a few minutes must end his life. In vain Ian, standing on the nearest edge, threw the rope within his reach. He could not grasp it, and by the appearance of his face as he lay with his head half pillowed on the sands, it was plain he could make no effort. But Ian did not despair, his habitual glee had departed, the thin dark face was set, the glancing eyes resolute and keen, save when they strayed fitfully to seaward, then their light seemed to fade. Tying the rope firmly round his chest with a firm knot, he hurriedly directed the girl to hold the other end tightly, and lying flat on the brink, prepared to stretch himself as if to swim on the deceitful surface. These working floes readily sustain anything flatly laid upon them. Gently gliding forward like a boat, he launched himself slowly out, the rope the girl held supporting his head and shoulders. It was a work of time, when every moment was precious. Already a white breaker had invaded the lower part of the flow, which surged dangerously. The next moment the sands rose to Dayrell's neck. But just then the vice-like grip of Ian fastened on his collar, and raised him by a superhuman effort,—trying to the deliverer's safety and straining the rope—several inches from the ooze. Urging the other, in Gaelic, to cling to his neck, Ian supported him, and working backward with the aid of Mairi's vigorous pulling, the two struggled safely to the bank. Dayrell was faint and chilled and at first

could hardly stand. It was only the spreading foam now around and beyond them, that nerved him at all. In his wild, shrieking way Ian directed them both to cling fast to his arms on either side, and half supporting, half dragging them, for his speed was beyond their powers, the three rushed up the sands.

"Were they yet in time to escape the tide?" was the question with Ian and Mairi. Frank, who had not yet fully recovered his senses, and who did not know the intricacies of the ford, thought all was safe if only they outstripped the waves *behind* them. None spoke but Ian, who urged his companions on and encouraged them with the hope that all might be well. Poor fellow, he well knew that even trusting to his own fleet steps he would have quitted the sands half an hour ago! It was not the same way, to all appearance, by which they had come. It was broken up now with streams and breaks of hurrying water. The pools were all swollen with the coming tide, from the Muich on the eastern side, as well as with the Atlantic waters. Sometimes they had to make long circuits to escape the brimming pools which lay on every hand, and every delay of this kind hastened the coming of the awful flood behind them, the sound of it now loud in their ears. "One point in front," Ian screamed to them as they ran, "was the deciding one." If they could wade that one, all was well. Alas! when they reached it nothing was to be seen, as far as the mist permitted, but a swollen, rolling flood, crested with gleaming waves. The tide-race there was too rapid and strong even for Ian himself, and stretched as far as the eye could reach. Hope was at an end! They gazed blankly at each other, these hunted creatures, one of them saved from death only to ingulf the others in a later but similar fate. Even Ian broke down. He urged them indeed to go with him further up, but both he and Mairi knew that being on the lower edge of the fatal "long sand," they were, in reality, in a *cul-de-sac*, the fords on either hand impassable, the tide behind, and beyond them. All they could do was to make for an iron guide-post several feet in height, one of a series once erected in the sands, and with some rude masonry at its base. Standing on the latter they were a few inches above the sands. It was only delaying the inevitable for a little, it would not help them long, and it was useless to attempt to signal to the shore, for the distance and the fog alone prevented, if it were not that the "long sand" from its position is scarcely visible from the land. They made thither accordingly. Frank knew now. It was hard, hard, death so close, and all so young! What did it matter now that the tide washed round their every step, or the sands were slippery and yielding under them, as they reached the standard, a truncated iron pillar, with a broken arm stretched out near the top? In a few minutes it would be all the same. Through death's bitterness they severally passed as they took their station on the little cairn at the foot. Ian swarming the standard, and the other two, side by side, on the base. It was all alike, a foot or two what did it matter? Little they said to each other in the supreme moments. Frank only spoke once, when Mairi took her station by him and her streaming hair rested on his shoulder. He bent down

to her and whispered in her ear. She did not reply, and, then, he stooped again, and, unreproved, laid a kiss upon her lips.

CHAPTER III

HOW THE CATECHIST RETURNED TO THE WORK

THE morning after his visit to Fergus's cottage, Donald Cameron, the catechist, who had sojourned in a "neighbor's house" during the night, at Clachan, five miles away, found himself in a very dissatisfied humor. He had been greatly disappointed. The "work" in the South Isles had exhilarated and inspired him at the time, and while he was in the midst of it, but its effects had now diminished sadly, even in his own eyes. While still on the spot he had often pictured to himself the enthusiasm which his reports of the movement would create among the "colder" people further north. The first discouragement he had received after crossing the ford was Fergus's rather curt remarks anent the dangers of excitement. The old man was certainly lukewarm. Here, at Clachan, the spiritual temperature was still lower. Some went so far as to say that these continual meetings might do harm instead of good —in other words, they were inclined to "scoff." Generally his report was neither believed nor approved of; or if accepted at all, it was with grave qualifications. In this frigid atmosphere the catechist's own feelings were becoming chill. When cold a man instinctively seeks the fireside, so the good man resolved to go back, without delay, to the scene of the excitement, and, by taking two Clachan boatmen to ferry him thither by sea, secure at least two witnesses to the accuracy of his reports; the aforesaid Donald MacDonald (or Dhomnuil Mhor) being one. So, in a small boat, they all started the same morning for South Uist. During the passage, which was an easy one owing to the prevailing currents, the sails were little used; all that was necessary was to head the boat into the running tide, and steer cautiously on account of the uncertain mist. So there was ample opportunity for haranguing his two companions as to the subject nearest to the catechist's heart. It was also convenient for the good man to be able, as it were, to clinch any surprising and otherwise incredible statement regarding it, with the additional guaranty that they would see it for themselves on arriving,—a part of the paction being that the two men were to remain, for at least one night, at the port of arrival.

A good part of the passage accomplished, it was no wonder that the single topic continuously enlarged and dwelt upon should become slightly wearisome to the listeners. Indeed, their instructor was just about to administer a serious rebuke to Donald for the lack of interest in the subject, which his frequent gaping evinced, when a shrill and piercing whistle broke on their ears, proceeding, apparently, from the upper reaches of the ford across the entrance of which they were now passing. They started to their feet.

"What can that be?" said Dhomnuil Mhor, "in the name of all that's earthly?"

Nothing was visible on the watery waste all round, though the mist was too close to see far. Yet again, and

again, that shrill whistle rang down the ford from the southeast.

"That's no bird-cry," said the catechist, as he turned the helm for upstream.

Suddenly Donald, who had been scanning the water from the bows, darted from the thwart and seized the ropes to hoist the sail.

"Row," he cried, loudly, to the other, "*row* a point to the starboard. For the long sand! there's some one caught on the standard there!"

Up flew mainsail and jib! and down the boat swept, the foaming waves to the gunwale. The catechist forgot even the South Isles in the excitement.

"Steady with the helm," roared Donald, "the sea is heavy ahead!"

Then they peered anxiously into the mist where the white water was breaking, far over the long sand.

"I see three persons there," cried the catechist, excitedly, standing tiller in hand. "They are holding on by the standard; one a woman, with light hair; the other is surely McAlastair. They are well nigh gone. Can the third be the jesting Englishman who makes light——"

"Stow that!" said Dhomnuil, impatiently—his nerves were high strung, for a thought had darted into his mind, and your Celt is jealous as the grave.

Indeed, they were just in time—a minute or two more, and they would have been too late, as the boat swept round and came alongside the perishing group. Had it not been for Ian, who had manfully held up from above the other two, first by his strong arms, and then by the rope swung from the cross limb, the two would have been washed away long before, the water had been completely over them at times. Mairi had been insensible, till the boat was sighted and hailed by Ian, and Dayrell had been half unconscious at times. Ian had now completely recovered his glee, and cheered and shrieked lustily; but the other two were with difficulty carried into the rocking boat. Donald lifted Mairi in first; he carried her in his arms like a child to the stern, unceremoniously displacing the catechist, raised her drooping head on the seat, and taking off his own rough coat, bound it round her, chafing her hands till she lifted her eyes and smiled faintly on him. Ian, whose excited temperament rose to fever-pitch, shrieked and gesticulated so wildly that they could scarcely get him lifted in. The other boatman so far forgot himself as to term the poor lad (with that copiousness of epithet so peculiarly marked in Gaelic) a "screeching fowl of darkness." But at last they got him in, and he was bundled in the bow, beside Dayrell, white and speechless.

"Steer for Carnish!" cried Donald; alas, for the South Isles and "the work!" The boat swept nobly round, and bore for the North-ford entrance.

A heavy cloud rested on Dhomnuil Mohr's brow, which even the rescue of his loved Mairi from death could not dispel. As, under canvas, they shot up the tide-reaches, passing the Flow of Mingalay fathoms deep beneath, his eye rested first on Mairi lying restfully in the dripping wet on the aft thwarts, and then on Dayrell, still too exhausted to answer any query. From Ian no satisfaction could be got—his brain was in a whirl and he raved about the long sand and the flow, all the way, with an audience of nobody in particular. The

catechist could shed no light upon the circumstances, as he sat drying Mairi's dripping hair with his handkerchief and chafing her bloodless hands. There was a mystery about it all, thought Donald. In less than half an hour they were ashore, Frank in bed at the inn, Mairi safe at home, and Ian, poor Ian, the unboastful hero of the day, left to walk home, some miles away—drenched to the skin.

The catechist, indeed, under the peculiar circumstances, contrived to appear as the hero of the rescue!

But just before Ian parted from the boatman, he called Dhomnuil Mhor aside, and asked him (very injudiciously) how it was that Mairi and Frank came to be on the ford at all? Donald shook his head gravely and negatively. The other's eyes sparkled, his mouth expanded as if from ear to ear, and he whispered to his companion, in Gaelic, "He kissed her on the ford, at all events, for *I saw him!*" So saying, and nodding in a reassuring way, he departed. Donald subsequently went to the inn, having dodged the catechist meanwhile, and under the pretext of inquiring for Dayrell, imbibed much more of that good spirit, the Talisker, than was at all judicious or advisable.

So runs the tide of human life and its issues. But the stream of the Carnish Ford recks not of these. Its ageless ebb and flow is careless of life and death and love.

Up at Fergus's cottage, some days later, Mairi and Frank meet once more. Fergus has gone out of doors "to look at the 'lazy-beds,' " he said, and the two stand together inside the door. Her hand is in his, her eyes are downcast. His pleading has been strong and passionate, but "many waters" have not quenched the maiden's plighted love, and his wish is not to be. He bears it manfully, and by and by, seeks the dwelling of Dhomnuil Mhor and makes it all right in that quarter. Nor does he forget Ian; the fatherless lad and his mother have a goodly provision for their lives.

Later that evening, while the tide is flowing, flowing smoothly and bright with the western sun, two lives are made happy. The ford-waves have removed the obstacle to their marriage. Mairi and her lover sit in her father's cottage, Frank before he leaves for the south, arranges for their farm and its stocking, and promises to stay for the wedding.

The catechist did not return to the South Isles after all. Rumor hath it that he was afterward a guest at the wedding; report even says that he danced thereat. But all agree that a more joyous wedding was never celebrated in the Island.

Captain Coucy

"Some hundred and odd years since there was in France one Captain Coucy, a gallant gentleman of ancient extraction, and keeper of Coucy Castle, which is yet standing and in good repair. He fell in love with a young gentlewoman, and courted her for his wife. There was reciprocal love between them; but her parents understanding of it, by way of prevention, they shuffled up a forced

match betwixt her and one Monsieur Fayel, who was a great heir. Captain Coucy hereupon quitted France in great discontent, and went to the wars in Hungary against the Turks, where he received a mortal wound not far from Buda. Being carried to his lodging, he languished some days; but a little before his death he spoke to an ancient servant of his, that he had had many proofs of his fidelity and truth, but now he had a great business to intrust him with, which he conjured him by all means to do; which was, that after his death he should get his body to be opened, and then to take his heart out of his breast and put it in an earthen pot to be baked to powder; then to put the powder into a handsome box, with that bracelet of hair he had worn long about his left wrist, which was a lock of Madame Fayel's hair, and put it among the powder, together with a little note he had written with his own blood to her; and after he had given him the rites of burial, to make all the speed he could to France, and deliver the said box to Madame Fayel. The old servant did as his master had commanded him, and so went to France; and coming one day to Monsieur Fayel's house, he suddenly met him with one of his servants, and examined him, because he knew he was Captain Coucy's servant; and finding him timorous and faltering in his speech, he searched him and found the said box in his pocket, with the note which expressed what was therein; he dismissed the bearer, with menaces that he should come no more near his house. Monsieur Fayel going in, sent for his cook and delivered him the powder, charging him to make a little, well-relished dish of it, without losing a jot of it, for it was a very costly thing; and commanded him to bring it in himself after the last course at supper. The cook bringing in the dish accordingly, Monsieur Fayel told all to avoid the room; and began a serious discourse with his wife. Since he had married her, he observed, she was always melancholy, and feared she was inclining to a consumption, therefore he had provided her a very precious cordial, which he was well assured would cure her; therefore he made her eat up the whole dish; and afterwards much importuning him to know what it was, he told her at last she had eaten Coucy's heart, and so drew the box out of his pocket, and showed her the note, and the bracelet. In a sudden exultation of joy, she with a far-fetched sigh, said, *This is a precious cordial indeed;* and so licked the dish, saying, *It is so precious that 'tis a pity to put ever any meat upon it.* So she went to bed, and in the morning was found stone dead.

The Maid of Bregenz

WHERE the "blue heart" of Lake Constance sleeps calm and serene in its azure depths, there came, three hundred years ago, to the little Swiss village on its banks, a young and interesting girl from Bregenz, on the Austrian frontier. She was evidently poor, for she sought work in a farmer's employ, and stated

her willingness to perform any kind of labor which her strength would permit her to engage in.

She became an inmate of the house of Paul Hentzner, a farmer and goat-herd; and made herself so eminently useful in every way, that the family would not hear of her ever leaving them. Alternately she carded and spun, tended goats, or sung sweet and tender ballads to the children of the household, who loved the sweet Bertha dearer than even their own mother.

Not alone did she attend to the domestic concerns. She had other occupations, dearer and far more pleasant. She tended the little garden, carried the children to school, to the house of an old woman, more than half a mile distant, and in the twilight she sang sweet ballads to them by the fireside. No one was so good to the little people as Bertha. She it was who walked with them, in the first dewy light of early morning, by the lake side, or drew them on the little sledge, upon its frozen edge, in the wintry noons.

Outwardly, the young girl seemed content with this; and her life and mission was apparently fulfilled in the serene round of duties that presented itself to her performance. But inwardly a fire was burning in her heart, almost as intensely as in that of the heroic maiden of Orleans; and in the hush of her little bed-room, where she lay watching the stars that beamed over Lake Constance, and thought of the dear home she had left lying just beyond it, all soft and sweet and holy emotions became mingled with a burning desire to do something for that home, which should make it grand and glorious.

High dreams and wild were these for the humble little maiden of the Tyrol; but they were born of the enthusiasm of her own soul, and of the record, even then of a hundred years old, of the heroic young standard-bearer at Rheims; and who shall say that those visions were not prophetic of the future?

Year lapsed away after year, and the girl grew in strength and beauty. The dwellers on the banks of Lake Constance—simple, quiet, straight-forward people—most of them peasants—saw this beauty in the young goat-tender, but could not tell whence came its mystic influence upon their hearts. Other eyes—young, gay and laughing eyes—were as bright, as deeply blue, and shadowed by lashes as long and dark as hers; but none wore that mysterious beauty that beamed in those of Bertha. But this soul-light in hers! in that lay the mystic meaning which they could not fathom.

Bertha had sung little Fergus and Louise to sleep one evening, with a more warlike ballad than was her wont. She was even startled when she thought of the strange words she was carolling over the soft white eye-lids and bright red cheeks of the innocent babes, and changed her tune suddenly into a low, sweet lullaby, that seemed far more appropriate to the occasion; but ever and anon, when they stirred in their light slumbers, she would involuntarily break out anew with

"Brave Leopold led on the ranks,
And Victory claimed him as her own."

The apartment was adjoining that of the family, and she could distinctly hear every noise that was made in the latter.

Dame Hentzner had gone out to have a bit of gossip with a neighbor, and there had been no one in the cottage for half an hour, save Bertha and the children. She had just succeeded in lulling them into that "peaceful sleep which only childhood knows," when she heard Paul enter with a subdued step, the outer apartment, followed by two or three men whose voices she knew. There was no egress for her save through this outer room, and she concluded to stay there by the window and watch the soft starlight through a chink in the folds of the curtain which effectually darkened the room. Paul opened the door, but she knew she was not visible, and did not speak; and he closed it again, unconscious that any one was there.

For a long time she gazed upward upon the starry fields. Their stillness and beauty penetrated deep into her mind, and she forgot for awhile that any human being was near her. The stars alone seemed to bend towards her, and she almost fancied that she heard mysterious hymnings from their sparkling depths. High and lofty imaginings had place in the simple maiden's guileless heart, and it would almost seem that the angels themselves talked with her that night, in the dim, low room, with the two children—"God's possible angels"—lying near her.

Such exaltation of spirit, however, cannot last long, and Bertha was startled back into human feeling again, by hearing the word Bregenz. This is the little frontier town lying at the eastern extremity of Lake Constance, between the Swiss and Bavarian territories. It is a romantic little place, although stripped of some of its ancient romance by the introduction of cotton manufactures, and that of the frames of wooden houses for the Alpine districts of Switzerland; besides vast quantities of vine poles, for the vineyards on the lakes. But nothing can exceed its local situation for beauty and picturesqueness, as it hangs over Lake Constance, as if it were gazing into its fair and peaceful depths, as human eyes love to gaze there.

She did not realize where the word was uttered. It seemed spoken to her soul, more than to her ear. She had opened the window, for the little room seemed close and warm, and the girl panted for air, long before the bright influences of the stars had taken possession of her.

Just as she heard the word, a soft touch upon the arm that lay outside the window, startled her almost into a cry. She hushed down the half-uttered scream, into a low, sobbing, suppressed breathing, like that which comes to our ear from a heavy sleeper. Something white stood beside the window, and for a moment she believed that some spirit was near her. It was but for an instant. She saw immediately that the object was only the pretty white horse which Paul Hentzner valued most of all his possessions, scarcely excepting either wife or children; leastwise, he bestowed upon him far more care and thought. None of the Swiss in that region could exhibit an animal comparable with White Olgerd. He had been sent as a present to Paul, from the choicest of the Ukraine breed—a remembrancer of a time long ago, when the goatherd had taken home a wounded huntsman, and restored him to life and health.

White Olgerd was swift of limb as the

wild steed that carried Mazeppa, but as gentle as swift. He would pace around the little paddock all day, nibbling the sweet, though scanty grass, or feed daintily from the hands of Bertha and the children as quietly as did their goats; yet, if but a bird stooped to drink at the lake, and flapped its broad wings as it rose upward, White Olgerd's silky ears were strained back, and he would gallop off as if a hundred whips were held above him.

Bertha patted the head that now rested on the window-sill, and drew a few crumbs from her apron pocket, to feed him with; almost forgetting the dream in which she thought she had been revelling, of her native Bregenz, when the same word came again to her ear. This time she was awakened sufficiently to distinguish that it came straight from the room beyond, and that it was now mingled with indistinct murmurs of some great deed that was to be accomplished. It filled her with strange fears. She recalled words and detached sentences that she had heard for several days among the peasants, but which she had only considered mere pass words of jesting import, and had paid no attention to them; and she now remembered, too, that under pretence of amusement, Paul and one or two of his neighbors had spent several hours a day in practising at the sword exercise.

All these things rushed into her mind at once, forming a distinct picture, to which the finishing touch was given by the impression made on her at the sound of a low, cautious voice, saying a few words, in which she distinguished—"Bregenz—midnight—surprise."

She crept to the door that separated the two rooms. Paul and two or three of his associates were within the range of her vision, but she felt, rather than saw, that the room was nearly full. The faces she saw wore a determined fierceness, and the hands of the confederates seemed to be grasping each other, as if in token of a league.

"Bregenz—midnight—surprise! Bregenz shall be ours!" was the hushed yet audible sound that reached her now.

A prayer,—fervent, but unspoken, save in the depths of that brave, heroic heart, rose to heaven at that moment. "O, God! save Bregenz!" Another voice that seemed to come from the shining stars uttered audibly to her soul, "Go forth and save Bregenz!"

She sprang to the ground, from the low window, and White Olgerd came to her side. She led him noiselessly to the little shed where his simple trappings hung, and saddled and bridled him hastily. He walked as gently as a child over the turf that lay behind the house, until Bertha stopped him at a rock that had answered the purpose of a horse-block. There she mounted him, and touching him lightly on the neck, he bounded off at the signal at his utmost speed. Mile after mile, over stone, morass and brier—on the very edge of precipices from which, not the rider's eye, but the animal's instinct, kept them, past rushing streams and dark ravines and gloomy dells, with the wild prayer lingering on her lips, "O, God, bring me to Bregenz!" the maiden guided the spirited steed. Bravely did White Olgerd do her bidding. She paused a moment to let the gallant steed take breath, and then in that pause, she heard the loud rushing of the Rhine.

The horse drew in a long—long breath, and gave out a grateful neigh. She dared not let him kiss the silver brook that ran coldly beside the road, although White Olgerd heard it and paused; but his dripping sides forbade her to allow the dangerous luxury, and she spurred on the obedient creature to new speed.

Eleven chimes from the tower of the old cathedral. Press on, gallant steed! The heights of Bregenz rise in the distance. Nay, plunge into the stream! Thou carriest a brave and noble heart as ever beat in woman! No longer the simple maiden, who but yesterday tended goats and sung lullabies to children—but a gallant, heroic, dauntless woman, bent on the noblest errand. No war-like chief that rides triumphant over the battle-field, ever deserved better of his country than the simple Maid of the Tyrol.

"O, God! bring me to Bregenz!" And with that heartfelt aspiration on her lips, the brave white steed winds up the pathway. The moon has risen now, and Bregenz lies bathed in her light, the roofs catching and reflecting her beams. The sentinel at the old stone gateway calls out, and Bertha, panting and almost breathless, bids him ring out the chimes from the tower on the hill. Even while its deep, clanging sound falls on the sleeper's ear, White Olgerd is bearing her rider on through the streets of Bregenz, while she calls upon all to arouse and prepare for defence.

Twelve o'clock! midnight! and Bregenz is safe! Saved by the maid and her charger. White Olgerd lies that night in state; his tired limbs bathed with costly oil, and rubbed by the hands of one that never condescended before to any but a princely service.

And Bertha puts off the travel-stained robes—the peasant suit—and puts on fine linen fit for royal forms, and sleeps on eider down, instead of last night's couch of rushes. And so indeed she ought!

The Bregenz women sit spinning in the warm sunshine that rests lovingly on the peaceful heights. Over Lake Constance there hangs a silvery mist—like a robe of dazzling tissue, through which the sun is pouring his softened and subdued radiance. Night comes on, and they leave off their work, but sit and gaze upon the old stone gateway in the west, where, in full relief against the lingering clouds of sunset, stands the monument of a grateful people—the MAID AND THE CHARGER, in enduring stone. Every time the warder passes by, he cries the passing hour. At *eleven*, he calls out the name of BERTHA. Three hundred years ago this deed was done, and they still keep the memory of the heroic maid green.

They who are given to the mystic speculations of the age, affirm that Joan of Arc finds her spiritual partner in the world beyond the stars, in the spirit of him whom she died to benefit. All that can be said of the union is, that if such a mean-spirited, ungrateful being as Charles VII. could win such a bride on earth or in heaven, the maid must be no less forgiving than she was heroic.

Bertha waited not for death to bring her a bridal day. Nor did she wed with plebian blood. An Austrian prince acknowledged her nobility—that nobility

of which nature had stamped the patent —and the fair children to whom she gave birth, were descended from a long line of unblemished ancestry—a line in which all the men are brave and all the women beautiful. Yet when questioned of their highest boast, it would ever be —not of their princely descent, but of the higher rank of the descendants of the immortal Maid of Bregenz.

Duke Alva

A GERMAN lady, descended from a family long renowned for valiant feats of arms, and which had already given an emperor to Germany, on a particular occasion made the formidable Duke of Alva tremble by her bold and resolute conduct. As the Emperor Charles V. on his return, in the year 1547, from the battle of Muhlberg to his camp in Suabia passed through Thuringia, Catherina, countess dowager of Schwartzburg, born princess of Henneberg, obtained of him a letter of safeguard that her subjects might have nothing to suffer from the Spanish army on its march through her territories; in return for which, she bound herself to allow the Spanish troops that were transported to Rudolstadt on the Saalbrucke to supply themselves with bread, beer, and other provisions, at a reasonable price in that place. At the same time she took the precaution to have the bridge which stood close to the town demolished in all haste, and reconstructed over the river at a considerable distance, that the too great proximity of the city might be no temptation to her rapacious guests. The inhabitants, too, of all the places through which the army was to pass were informed, that they might send the chief of their valuables to the castle of Rudolstadt.

Meantime the Spanish general, attended by Prince Henry of Brunswick and his sons, approached the city, and invited themselves by a messenger whom they despatched before, to take their morning's repast with the Countess of Schwartzburg. So modest a request, made at the head of an army, was not to be rejected. The answer returned was, that they should be kindly supplied with what the house afforded; that his excellency might come, and be assured of a welcome reception. However, she did not neglect at the same time to remind the Spanish general of the safeguard, and to urge home to him the conscientious observance of it.

A friendly reception and a well-furnished table welcomed the arrival of the duke at the castle. He was obliged to confess that the Thuringian ladies had an excellent notion of cookery, and did honor to the laws of hospitality. But scarcely had they taken their seats, when a messenger out of breath called the countess from the hall. His tidings informed her that the Spanish soldiers had used violence in some villages on the way, and had driven off the cattle belonging to the peasants. Catharina was a true mother to her people; whatever the poorest of her subjects unjustly suffered wounded her to the very quick. Full of indignation at this breach of faith, yet not forsaken by her presence

of mind, she ordered her whole retinue to arm themselves immediately in private, and to bolt and bar all the gates of the castle; which done, she returned to the hall, and rejoined the princes, who were still at table. Here she complained to them in the most moving terms of the usage she had met with, and how badly the imperial word was kept. They told her, laughing, that this was the custom in war, and that such trifling disorders of soldiers in marching through a place were not to be minded. "That we shall presently see," replied she, stoutly; "my poor subjects must have their own, or by God! (raising her voice in a threatening tone) princes' blood for oxen's blood." With this emphatical declaration she quitted the room, which in a few minutes was filled with armed men, who sword in hand, yet with great reverence, planting themselves behind the chairs of the princes, took place of the waiters. On the entrance of these fierce-looking fellows, Duke Alva directly changed color, and they all gazed at one another in silence and affright. Cut off from the army, surrounded by a resolute body of men, what had they to do but to summon up their patience, and to appease the offended lady on the best terms they could? Henry of Brunswick was the first that collected his spirits, and smothered his feelings by bursting into a loud fit of laughter, thus seizing the most reasonable way of coming off by turning all that had passed into a subject of mirth. Concluding with a pompous panegyric on the patriotic concern and the determined intrepidity she had shown, he entreated her to make herself easy, and took it upon himself to bring the Duke of Alva to consent to whatever should be found reasonable; which he immediately effected by inducing the latter to dispatch on the spot an order to the army to restore the cattle without delay to the persons from whom they had been stolen. On the return of the courier with a certificate that all damages were made good, the Countess of Schwartzburg politely thanked her guests for the honor they had done her castle, and they in return very courteously took their leave.

Taking of the Redoubt

A MILITARY friend of mine, who died of fever in Greece some years ago, related to me one day the story of the first engagement in which he had taken part. His narrative was so striking that I wrote it down from memory as soon as I had an opportunity. It is as follows:

On the evening of the fourth of September I rejoined my regiment. I found the colonel in bivouac. At first he received me rather coolly, but, after having read General B——'s letter of recommendation, his manner changed, and he said a few kind words.

He introduced me to my captain, who had just returned from a reconnoitering expedition. This captain, whose acquaintance I had scarcely the time to make, was a tall, dark man, with a severe and forbidding expression. He had been a common soldier, and had won his commission and the cross on the battlefield. His voice was weak and hoarse, and contrasted strangely with his almost gigantic height. I was told that this strange voice was due to a ball which had pierced him through at the Battle of Jéna.

On hearing that I came from the school at Fontainebleau he shrugged his shoulders and said, "My lieutenant died yesterday." I understood that he meant to imply, "You are intended to take his place, and you are not up to it." A cutting reply rose to my lips, but I restrained myself.

Behind Fort Cheverino, which stood about two gunshots off our bivouac, rose the moon. It was large and red as it usually is when rising. But this evening it seemed to me to have an unusual splendour. For an instant the fort stood outlined in black against the shining orb, which looked like the cone of a volcano during eruption. An old soldier, near whom I was standing, remarked on the moon's colour.

"How very red it is!" he said; "it is a sign that it will cost much to take this precious fort."

I was always superstitious, and this omen, above all at such a moment, impressed me greatly. I laid myself down, but could not sleep. I got up and walked about for some time, watching the long lines of fire scattered over the heights beyond the village of Cheverino.

When I thought the fresh, sharp night air had sufficiently quickened my blood, I returned to the fire. I wrapped myself carefully in my cloak and closed my eyes, thinking not to open them before the morning. But sleep obstinately evaded me. Gradually my thoughts took a melancholy hue. I told myself I had not one friend amongst the hundred thousand men who covered that plain. If I were wounded I should go to the hospital, there to be treated without consideration by ignorant surgeons. All I had heard of surgical operations returned to my memory. My heart beat fast, and instinctively I arranged my handkerchief and pocket-book over my breast as a kind of cuirass. I was overcome with weariness, and I became more drowsy each moment, but at each mo-

ment some dark thought sprang up with greater force and woke me into a start.

Nevertheless weariness overcame me, and, when the reveille sounded, I was fast asleep. We fell into our ranks; the roll was called; then we piled arms again, and everything suggested that we were going to pass a quiet day.

About three o'clock an aide-de-camp arrived, bearing a dispatch, and we were ordered to shoulder arms. Our skirmishers scattered themselves over the plain; we followed them slowly, and in about twenty minutes' time we saw all the outposts of the Russians fall back and re-enter the fort.

One battery of artillery was on our right, another on our left, but both were well in advance of us. They opened a sharp fire on the enemy, who answered briskly; and very soon the fort of Cheverino was hidden under thick clouds of smoke.

Our regiment was almost protected from the Russian fire by a ridge of earth. Since they aimed rather at our artillery than at us, their balls passed over our heads, or at the most cast earth and small stone at us.

The moment the order to advance was given us my captain looked at me so closely that I felt impelled to stroke my budding moustache two or three times with as nonchalant an air as possible. In fact, I had no fear; my only dread was that people might think me afraid. Furthermore, these inoffensive shots contributed to keep me in a calm state of mind. My vanity told me that I was really in danger, being at last under battery fire. I was delighted to find myself so cool, and I dreamed of the pleasure of relating in the drawing-room of Madame B——, Rue de Provence, the story of the taking of the fort at Cheverino.

The colonel rode past our company and said to me, "Well, you are going to get it hot at your first battle."

I smiled with a truly military air, at the same time brushing from my sleeve some dust which a ball thirty paces off had thrown up.

It was evident that the Russians had noticed the miscarriage of their balls, for they replaced them by shells which could more easily reach us in the hollow where we were posted. One that burst near by knocked off my cap and killed a man close to me.

"I congratulate you," said the captain to me, as I picked up my cap. "Now you are safe for the day."

I was acquainted with the soldier's superstition that the axiom *non bis in idem* holds good as much on the battle-field as in the court of justice. I replaced my cap jauntily.

"That's a free and easy kind of greeting," I replied as jovially as possible. This poor joke seemed excellent under the circumstances.

"You are lucky," said the captain; "you need not fear anything more, and you will command a company to-night. I know very well that a bullet for me will find its billet to-day. Each time I have been wounded the officer next to me has been grazed by a spent bullet, and," he added in a lower and half-ashamed tone, "their names always begin with a P."

I took courage; most people would have done the same; most people would have been equally struck with such prophetic words. Conscript as I was, I did not think I could confide my feel-

ings to anybody. I thought I ought always to appear cool and brave.

About half an hour after, the fire of the Russians slackened considerably; then we sallied out of our cover to storm the fort.

Our regiment was composed of three battalions. The second was ordered to outflank the fort from the side of the gorge; the other two were to make the assault. I was in the third battalion.

Coming out from behind the buttress which had protected us, we were greeted by several rounds of fire, which did but little harm in our ranks. The whistling of the balls startled me: I kept looking round, thus bringing upon myself joking remarks from my more seasoned comrades.

"Upon the whole," I said, "a battle is not so very dreadful."

We advanced at the double, preceded by our sharpshooters; suddenly the Russians gave three cheers, three distinct hurrahs, then they stopped firing and became silent.

"I do not like that silence," said my captain; "it bodes no good to us."

I thought our men were a little too noisy, and I could not help inwardly contrasting their tumultuous clamour with the impressive silence of the enemy.

We quickly reached the outskirts of the fort, where the palisades had been broken and the earth thrown up by our balls. The soldiers leapt upon this newly broken ground with shouts of "Vive l'Empereur!" more loudly than one could have thought possible from men who had already shouted so much.

I raised my eyes, and never shall I forget the spectacle before me. Most of the smoke had risen, and was hanging like a canopy about twenty feet above the fort. Through the blue haze I could see the Russian Grenadiers, with arms fixed, like motionless statues, behind their half-destroyed parapet. I can see now each soldier, his left eye fixed on us, his right hidden by his raised gun. In an embrasure a few feet from us a man was holding a lighted fuse to a cannon.

I shuddered, and I thought my last hour had come.

"Now the fun begins," cried my captain. "Here goes!"

These were the last words I heard him speak.

A roll of drums sounded in the fort. I saw all the muskets levelled. I closed my eyes, and heard an appalling uproar, followed by shrieks and groans. I opened my eyes, surprised to find myself still alive. The fort was again wrapped in smoke. I was surrounded with wounded and dying. My captain lay stretched at my feet: his head had been smashed by a ball, and I was covered with his brains and blood Out of all my company there were only six men and myself left standing.

A moment of stupor followed this carnage. The colonel, putting his hat on the end of his sword, was the first to climb the parapet, shouting "Vive l'Empereur!" He was soon followed by all the survivors. I cannot remember clearly what followed. I do not know how we entered the fort. We fought hand to hand in such a dense smoke that we could not see. I suppose I hit, for I found my saber covered with blood. At last I heard the shout "Victory!" and, the smoke clearing away, I saw the ground of the fort covered with

blood and corpses. The guns especially were buried under heaps of dead. Scattered about in disorder stood about two hundred men in French uniform: some were loading their pieces, others wiping their bayonets. Eleven Russian prisoners were with them.

The colonel was lying covered with blood on a broken ammunition box near the gorge. Several soldiers crowded round him. I joined them.

"Where is the senior captain?" he asked one of the sergeants.

The sergeant shrugged his shoulders in a significant way.

"And the senior lieutenant?"

"Here is the gentleman who came yesterday," said the sergeant in a perfectly calm voice.

The colonel smiled bitterly.

"Well, monsieur, you are commander-in-chief," said he to me. "Have the gorge of the fort fortified at once with these wagons. The enemy is in force, but General C—— is coming to support you."

"Colonel," I said to him, "you are badly wounded."

"A fig for that, my lad. We have taken the redoubt!"

Lazarette

I STEPPED into the Brunswick Hotel in the East India Docks for a glass of ale. It was in the year 1853, and a wet, hot afternoon. I had been on the tramp all day, making just three weeks of a wretched, hopeless hunt after a situation on shipboard, and every bone in me ached with my heart. My precious timbers, how poor I was! Two shillings, and threepence—that was all the money I possessed in the wide world, and when I had paid for the ale, I was poorer yet by twopence.

A number of nautical men of various grades were drinking at the bar. I sat down in a corner to rest, and abandoned myself to the most dismal reflections. I wanted to get out to Australia, and nobody, it seems, was willing to ship me in any situation on any account whatever. Captains and mates howled me off if I attempted to cross their gangways. Nothing was to be got in the shipping yards. The very crimps sneered at me when I told them that I wanted a berth. "Shake your head, my hawbuck," said one of them, in the presence of a crowd of grinning seamen, "that the Johns may see the hayseed fly."

What was I, do you ask? I'll tell you. I was one of ten children whose father had been a clergyman, and the income "from all sources" of that same clergyman had never exceeded £230 a year. I was a lumbering, hulking lad, without friends, and, as I am now perfectly sensible, without brains, without any kind of taste for any pursuit, execrating the notion of clerkships, and perfectly willing to make away with myself sooner than be glued to a three-legged stool. But enough of this. The long and short is, I was thirsting to get out to Australia, never doubting that I should easily make my fortune there.

I sat in my corner in the Brunswick Hotel, scowling at the floor, my long legs thrust out, and my hands buried

deep in my breeches pockets. Presently, I was sensible that some one stood beside me, and looking up, I beheld a young fellow staring with all his might, with a slow grin of recognition wrinkling his face. I seemed to remember him.

"Mr. William Peploe, ain't it?" said he.

"Why yes," said I, "and you—and you——?"

"You don't remember Jem Back then, sir?"

"Yes I do, perfectly well. Sit down, Back. Are you a sailor? I am so dead beat that I can scarcely talk."

Jem Back brought a tankard of ale to my table, and sat down beside me. He was a youth of my own age, and I knew him as the son of a parishioner of my father. He was attired in nautical clothes, yet somehow he did not exactly look what is called a sailor man. We fell into conversation. He informed me that he was an under-steward on board a large ship called the "Huntress," that was bound out of the Thames in a couple of days for Sydney, New South Wales. He had sailed two years in her, and hoped to sign as head steward next voyage in a smaller ship.

"There'll be a good deal of waiting this bout," said he; "we're taking a cuddy full of swells out. There's Sir Thomas Mason—he goes as Governor; there's his lady and three daughters, and a sort of suet" (he meant suite) "sails along with the boiling." So he rattled on.

"Can't you help me to find a berth in that ship?" said I.

"I'm afraid not," he answered. "What could you offer yourself as, sir? They wouldn't have you forward, and aft we're chock-a-block. If you could manage to stow yourself away—they wouldn't chuck you overboard when you turned up at sea; they'd make you useful and land you as safe as if you was the Governor himself."

I thought this a very fine idea, and asked Back to tell me how I should go to work to hide myself. He seemed to recoil, I thought, when I put the matter to him earnestly, but he was an honest, kindly-hearted fellow, and remembered my father with a certain degree of respect, and even of affection; he had known me as a boy; there was the sympathy of association and of memory between us; he looked at the old suit of clothes I sat in, and at my hollow, anxious face, and he crooked his eyebrows with an expression of pain when I told him that all the money I had was two and a penny, and that I must starve and be found floating a corpse in the dockyard basin if I did not get out to Australia. We sat for at least an hour over our ale, talking very earnestly, and when we arose and bade each other farewell I had settled with him what to do.

The "Huntress" was a large frigate-built ship of 1400 tons. On the morning of the day on which she was to haul out of dock I went on board of her. Nobody took any notice of me. The vessel was full of business, clamorous with the life and hurry of the start for the other side of the world. Cargo was still swinging over the main hold, down whose big, dark square a tall, strong, red-bearded chief mate was roaring to the stevedore's men engulfed in the bowels of the ship. A number of drunken sailors were singing and cutting capers on the forecastle. The main-deck was full of steerage, or, as they were then termed, 'tweendeck passengers—

grimy men, and seedy women and wailing babes, and frightened, staring children. I did not pause to muse upon the scene, nor did I gaze aloft at the towering spars, where, forward, up in the dingy sky of the Isle of Dogs, floated that familiar symbol of departure, Blue Peter. I saw several young men in shining buttons and cloth caps with gold badges, and knew them to be midshipmen, and envied them. Every instant I expected to be ordered out of the ship by some one with hurricane lungs and a vast command of injurious language, and my heart beat fast. I made my way to the cuddy front, and just as I halted beside a group of women at the booby hatch, James Back came to the door of the saloon. He motioned to me with a slight toss of his head.

"Don't look about you," he whispered; "just follow me straight."

I stepped after him into the saloon. It was like entering a grand drawing-room. Mirrors and silver lamps sparkled; the panelled bulkheads were rich with hand paintings; flowers hung in plenty under the skylight; goldfish gleamed as they circled in globes of crystal. These things and more I beheld in the space of a few heart-beats.

I went after James Back down a wide staircase that sank through a large hatch situated a dozen paces from the cuddy front. When I reached the bottom I found myself in a long corridor, somewhat darksome, with cabins on either hand. Back took me into one of those cabins and closed the door.

"Now listen, Mr. Peploe," said he. "I'm going to shut you down in the lazarette." He pulled a piece of paper from his pocket, on which was a rude tracing. "This is the inside of the lazarette," he continued, pointing to the tracing. "There are some casks of flour up in this corner. They'll make you a safe hiding-place. You'll find a bag of ship's biscuit and some bottles of wine and water and a pannikin stowed behind them casks. There's cases of bottled ale in the lazarette, and plenty of tinned stuffs and grub for the cabin table. But don't broach anything if you can hold out."

"When am I to show myself?"

"When we're out of Soundings."

"Where's that?" said I.

"Clear of the Chops," he answered. "If you come up when the land's still in sight the captain'll send you ashore by anything that'll take you, and you'll be handed over to the authorities and charged."

"How shall I know when we're clear of the Chops?" said I.

"I'll drop below into the lazarette on some excuse and tell you," he answered. "You'll be very careful when you turn up, Mr. Peploe, not to let them guess that anybody's lent you a hand in this here hiding job. If they find out I'm your friend, then it's all up with Jem Back. He's a stone-broke young man, and his parents'll be wishing of themselves dead rather than they should have lived to see this hour."

"I have sworn, and you may trust me, Back."

"Right," said he. "And now, is there e'er a question you'd like to ask before you drop below?"

"When does the ship haul out?"

"They may be doing of it even whilst we're talking," he said.

"Can I make my escape out of the lazarette should I feel very ill, or as if I was going to suffocate?"

"Yes, the hatch is a little un. The cargo sits tall under him, and you can stand up and shove the hatch clear of its bearings should anything go seriously wrong with you. But don't be in a hurry to feel ill or short o' breath. There's no light, but there's air enough. The united smells, perhaps, ain't all violets, but the place is warm."

He paused, looking at me inquiringly. I could think of nothing more to ask him. He opened the door, warily peered out, then whispered to me to follow, and I walked at his heels to the end of the corridor near the stern. I heard voices in the cabins on either hand of me; some people came out of one of the after berths, and passed us, talking noisily, but they took no heed of me or of my friend. They were passengers, and strangers to the ship, and would suppose me a passenger also, or an under-steward, like Jem Back, who, however, now looked his vocation, attired as he was in a camlet jacket, black cloth breeches, and a white shirt.

We halted at a little hatch-like trap-door a short way forward of the bulk-heads of the stern cabins. Back grasped the ring in the center of the hatch, and easily lifted the thing, and laid open the hold.

"All's clear," said he, looking along the corridor. "Down with you, Mr. Peploe." I peered into the abyss, as it seemed to me; the light hereabouts was so dim that but little of it fell through the small square of hatchway, and I could scarcely discern the outlines of the cargo below. I put my legs over and sank, holding on with a first voyager's grip to the coaming of the hatch; then, feeling the cargo under my feet, I let go, and the instant I withdrew my hands, Back popped the hatch on.

The blackness was awful. It affected me for some minutes like the want of air. I thought I should smother, and could hardly hinder myself from thrusting the hatch up for light, and for the comfort of my lungs. Presently the sense of suffocation passed. The corridor was uncarpeted; I heard the sounds of footsteps on the bare planks overhead, and, never knowing but that at any moment somebody might come into this lazarette, I very cautiously began to grope my way over the cargo. I skinned my hands and my knees, and cut my small clothes against all sorts of sharp edges in a very short time. I never could have realized the like of such a blackness as I was here groping through. The deepest midnight overhung by the electric cloud would be as bright as dawn or twilight compared to it.

I carried, however, in my head the sketch Back had drawn of this interior, and remembering that I had faced aft when my companion had closed me down, I crawled in the direction in which I imagined the casks and my stock of bread and wine lay; and to my great joy, after a considerable bit of crawling and clawing about, during which I repeatedly wounded myself, I touched a canvas bag, which I felt, and found full of ship's bread, and on putting my hand out in another direction, but close by where the bag was, I touched a number of bottles. On this I felt around, carefully stroking the blackness with my maimed hands, and discovered that I had crawled into a recess formed by the stowage of a number of casks on their bilge; a little space was left behind them

and the ship's wall; it was the hiding-place Back had indicated, and I sat down to breathe and think, and to collect my wits.

I had no means of making a light; but I don't believe that in any case I should have attempted to kindle a flame, so great would have been my terror of setting the ship on fire. I kept my eyes shut, fancying that that would be a good way to accustom my vision to the blackness. And here I very inopportunately recollected that one of the most dreadful prison punishments inflicted upon mutinous and ill-behaved felons is the locking of them up in a black room, where it is thought proper not to keep them very long lest they should go mad; and I wondered how many days or hours it would take to make a lunatic of me in this lazarette, that was as black certainly as any black room ever built for refractory criminals.

I had no clothes save those I wore. Stowaways as a rule do not carry much luggage to sea with them. I had heard tell of ships' slop-chests, however, and guessed, when I was enlarged and put to work, the captain would let me choose a suit of clothes and pay for them out of my wages. I did not then know that it is not customary for commanders of ships to pay stowaways for their services. Indeed, I afterwards got to hear that far better men than the average run of stowaway were, in their anxiety to get abroad, very willing to sign articles for a shilling a month, and lead the lives of dogs for that wage.

I had come into the ship with a parcel of bread and cheese in my pocket: feeling hungry I partook of this modest refreshment, and clawing round touched a bottle, pulled the loosely-fitted cork out, and drank. This small repast heartened me, I grew a little less afraid of the profound blackness, and of the blue and green lights which came and went upon it, and began to hope I should not go mad.

The hours sneaked along. Now and again a sort of creaking noise ran through the interior, which made me suppose that the ship was proceeding down the river in tow of a tug. Occasionally I heard the tread of passengers overhead. It pleased me to hear that sound. It soothed me by diminishing the intolerable sense of loneliness bred by the midnight blackness in which I lay. The atmosphere was warm, but I drew breath without difficulty. The general smell was, indeed, a complicated thing; in fact, the lazarette was a store-room. I seemed to taste ham, tobacco, cheese, and fifty other such matters in the air.

I had slept very ill on the preceding night, and after I had been for some hours in the lazarette I felt weary, and stretched myself along the deck between the casks and the ship's wall, and pillowed my head on my coat. I slept, and my slumber was deep and long. My dreams were full of pleasing imaginations—of nuggets of extraordinary size, chiefly, and leagues of rich pasture land whitened by countless sheep, all branded with the letter P. But after I had awakened and gathered my wits together, I understood that I had lost all count of time, that I should not know what o'clock it was, and whether it was day or night, until I had got out. I was glad to find that the blackness was not so intolerable as I had dreaded. I felt for the biscuits and bottles, and ate and drank as appetite dictated. Nobody in

all this while lifted the hatch. No doubt the steward had plenty of stores for current use in hand, and there might be no need to break out fresh provisions for some weeks.

I had lain, according to my own computation, very nearly two days in this black hole, when I felt a movement in the ship which immediately upset my stomach. The vessel, I might suppose, was in the Channel; her pitching grew heavier, the lazarette was right aft, and in no part of the vessel saving the bows could her motion be more sensibly felt. I was speedily overcome with nausea, and for many long hours lay miserably ill, unable to eat or drink. At the expiration of this time the sea ran more smoothly; at all events, the ship's motion grew gentle; the feeling of sickness suddenly passed, leaving me, indeed, rather weak, yet not so helpless but that I could sit up and drink from a bottle of wine and water, and eat a dry ship's biscuit.

Whilst I was munching the tasteless piece of sea bread, sitting in the intense blackness, pining for the fresh air and the sunshine, and wondering how much longer I was to wait for Back's summons to emerge, the hatch was raised. I shrank and held my breath, with my hand grasping the biscuit poised midway to my mouth, as though I had been withered by a blast of lightning. A faint sheen floated in the little square. It was the dim lustre of distant lamplight, whence I guessed it was night. The figure of a man cautiously dropped through the hatchway, and by some means, and all very silently, he contrived to readjust the hatch, shutting himself down as Back had shut me down. The motion of the ship, as I have said, was gentle, the creaking noises throughout the working fabric were dim and distant; indeed, I could hear the man breathing as he seemed to pause after bringing the hatchway to its bearings over his head. I did not suppose that the captain ever entered this part of the ship. The man, for all I could conjecture, might be one of the mates, or the boatswain, or the head steward, visiting the lazarette on some errand of duty, and coming down very quietly that the passengers who slept in the cabins on either hand the corridor should not be disturbed. Accordingly, I shrank into the compactest posture I could contort myself into, and watched.

A lucifer match was struck; the flame threw out the figure of a man standing on the cargo just under the hatch; he pulled out a little bull's-eye lamp from his pocket and lighted it, and carefully extinguished the match. The long, misty beam of the magnified flame swept the interior like the revolving spoke of a wheel as the man slowly turned the lens about in a critical search of the place, himself being in blackness. The line of light broke on the casks behind which I crouched, and left me in deep shadow unperceived. After some minutes of this sort of examination, the man came a little way forward and crouched down upon a bale or something of the sort directly abreast of the casks, through whose cant-lines I was peering. He opened the lamp and placed it beside him; the light was then full upon his figure.

He might have been an officer of the ship for all I knew. His dress was not distinguishable, but I had his face very plain in my sight. He was extremely pale; his nose was long and aquiline; he

wore moustaches, whiskers, and a short beard, black, but well streaked with grey. His eyebrows were bushy and dark; his eyes were black, and the reflected lamplight shot in gleams from them, like to that level spoke of radiance with which he had swept this lazarette. His hair was unusually long, even for that age of the fashion, and his being without a hat made me guess he was not from the deck, though I never doubted that he was one of the ship's company.

When he opened the bull's-eye lamp and put it down, he drew something out of his pocket which glittered in his hand. I strained my sight, yet should not have managed to make out what he grasped but for his holding it close to the light; I then saw that it was a small circular brass box; a kind of little metal cylinder, from whose side fell a length of black line, just as tape draws out of a yard measure. He talked to himself, with a sort of wild, scowling grin upon his face, whilst he inspected his brass box and little length of line; he then shut the lamp and flashed it upon what I saw was a medium-sized barrel, such, perhaps, as a brewer would call a four-and-a-half gallon cask. It rested on its bilge, after the manner in which the casks behind which I lay hidden were stowed.

I now saw him pull a spile or spike of wood out of the head of the barrel, and insert the end of the black line attached to the small brass piece in the orifice. This done he fitted a key to the brass box and wound it up. He may have taken twenty turns with the key; the lazarette was so quiet that I could distinctly hear the harsh grit of the mechanism as it was revolved. All the while he was thus employed he preserved his scowling smile, and whispered to himself. After he had wound up the piece of clockwork he placed it on the bale where his lamp had stood, and taking the light made for the hatchway, under which he came to a stand whilst he extinguished the bull's-eye. I then heard him replace the hatch, and knew he was gone.

The arrangement he had wound up ticked with the noise of a Dutch clock. I had but little brains in those days, as I have told you, and in sad truth I am not overloaded with that particular sort of cargo at this hour; but I was not such a fool as not to be able to guess what the man intended to do, and what that hollow, desperate ticking signified. Oh, my great God, I thought to myself, it is an infernal machine! and the ship will be blown up!

My horror and fright went far beyond the paralyzing form; they ran a sort of madness into my blood and vitalized me into desperate instant action. Utterly heedless now of hurting and wounding myself, I scrambled over the casks, directed by the noise of the ticking, stretched forth my hand and grasped the brass machine. I fiercely tugged it, then feeling for the slow match, as I guessed the line to be, I ran it through my fingers to make sure I had pulled the end out of the barrel. The murderous thing ticked in my hand with the energy of a hotly-revolved capstan, whilst I stood breathing short, considering what I should do, whilst the perspiration soaked through my clothes as though a bucket of oil had been upset over me. Heavens! the horror of standing in that black lazarette with an infernal machine ticking in my hands,

and a large barrel of gunpowder, as I easily guessed, within reach of a kick of my foot! I trembled in every limb and sweated at every pore, and seemed to want brains enough to tell me what ought next to be done!

How long I thus stood irresolute I don't know; still clutching the hoarsely-ticking piece of clockwork. I crawled in the direction in which I supposed lay the casks behind which I had hidden. I had scarcely advanced half a dozen feet when the mechanism snapped in my fingers; a bright flash, like to the leap of a flame in the pan of a flint musket, irradiated the lazarette; the match was kindled, and burnt freely. The first eating spark was but small; I extinguished the fiery glow between my thumb and forefinger, squeezing it in my terror with the power of the human jaw. The ticking ceased; the murderous thing lay silent and black in my hand. I waited for some minutes to recover myself, and then made up my mind to get out of the lazarette and go on deck, and tell the people that there was a barrel of gunpowder in the after-hold, and that I had saved the ship from having her side or stern blown out.

I pocketed the brass box and match, but it took me above half an hour to get out of the infernal hole. I fell into crevices, went sprawling over pointed edges, and twice came very near to breaking my leg. Happily, I was tall, and when I stood on the upper tier of cargo I could feel the deck above me, and once, whilst thus groping, I touched the edge of the hatchway, thrust up the cover, and got out.

I walked straight down the corridor, which was sown with passengers' boots, mounted the wide staircase, and gained the quarter-deck. I reeled and nearly fell, so intoxicating was the effect of the gushing draught of sweet, fresh night-wind after the stagnant, cheesy atmosphere of the lazarette. A bull's-eye shone on the face of a clock under the break of the poop; the hour was twenty minutes after two. Nothing stirred on the main deck and waist; the forward part of the ship was hidden in blackness. She was sailing on a level keel before the wind, and the pallid spaces of her canvas soared to the trucks, wan as the delicate curls and shreds of vapor which floated under the bright stars.

I ascended a flight of steps which led to the poop, and saw the shadowy figures of two midshipmen walking on one side the deck, whilst on the other side, abreast of the mizzen rigging, stood a third person. I guessed by his being alone that he was the officer of the watch, and stepped over to him. He drew himself erect as I approached, and sang out, "Hallo! who the devil are you?"

"I'm just out of your lazarette," said I, "where I've saved this ship from having her stern blown out by an infernal machine!"

He bent his head forward and stared into my face, but it was too dark for him to make anything of me. I reckoned he was the second mate; his outline against the stars defined a square, bullet-headed, thick-necked man. On a sudden he bawled out to the two midshipmen, who had come to a stand on t'other side the skylight—

"Mr. Freeling, jump below and call the captain. Beg him to come on deck at once, young gentleman."

The midshipman rushed into the cuddy.

"What's this yarn about blowing out the ship's stern?" continued the second mate, as I rightly took him to be.

I related my story as straightforwardly as my command of words permitted. I told him that I had wanted to get to Australia, that I was too poor to pay my passage, that I had been unable to find employment on board ship, that I had hidden myself in the lazarette of the "Huntress," and that whilst there, and within the past hour, I had seen a man fit a slow match into what I reckoned was a barrel of gun-powder, and disappear after setting his infernal machine a-going. And thus speaking, I pulled the machine out of my pocket, and put it into his hand.

At this moment the captain arrived on deck. He was a tall man, with a very deep voice, slow, cool, and deliberate in manner and speech.

"What's the matter?" he inquired, and instantly added, "Who is this man?"

The second mate gave him my story almost as I had delivered it.

The captain listened in silence, took the infernal machine, stepped to the skylight, under which a lamp was dimly burning, and examined the piece of mechanism. His manner of handling it by some means sprang the trigger, which struck the flint, and there flashed out a little sun-bright flame that fired the match. I jumped to his side and squeezed the fire out between my thumb and forefinger as before. The captain told the two midshipmen to rouse up the chief mate and send the boatswain and carpenter aft.

"Let there be no noise," said he to the second mate. "We want no panic aboard us. Describe the man," said he, addressing me, "whom you saw fitting this apparatus to the barrel." I did so. "Do you recognize the person by this lad's description?" said the captain to the second mate.

The second mate answered that he knew no one on board who answered to the likeness I had drawn.

"Gentlemen, I swear he's in the ship!" I cried, and described him again as I had seen him when the open bull's-eye allowed the light to stream fair upon his face.

But now the arrival of the chief officer, the boatswain, and the carpenter occasioned some bustle. My story was hastily re-told. The carpenter fetched a lantern, and the whole group examined the infernal machine by the clear light.

"There's no question as to the object of this piece of clockwork, sir," said the chief officer.

"None," exclaimed the captain; "it flashed a few minutes ago in my hand. The thing seems alive. Softly, now. The passengers mustn't hear of this: there must be no panic. Take the boatswain and carpenter along with you, Mr. Morritt, into the lazarette. But mind your fire." And he then told them where the barrel was stowed as I had described it.

The three men left the poop. The captain now examined me afresh. He showed no temper whatever at my having hidden myself on board his ship. All his questions concerned the appearance of the man who had adjusted the machine, how he had gone to work, what he had said when he talked to himself—but this question I could not answer. When he had ended his inquiries he sent for the chief steward, to whom he related what had happened, and then asked him if there was such a person in the

ship as I had described. The man answered there was.

"What's his name?"

"He's booked as John Howland, sir. He's a steerage passenger. His cabin's No. 2 on the starboard side. His meals are taken to him in his cabin, and I don't think he's ever been out of it since he came aboard."

"Go and see if he's in his cabin," said the captain.

As the steward left the poop the chief mate, the boatswain, and carpenter returned.

"It's as the young man states, sir," said Mr. Morritt. "There's a barrel of gunpowder stowed where he says it is with a hole in the head ready to receive the end of a fuse."

"Presently clear it out, and get it stowed away in the magazine," said the captain, calmly. "This has been a narrow escape. Carpenter, go forward and bring a set of irons along. Is there only one barrel of gunpowder below, d'ye say, Mr. Morritt?"

"No more, sir."

"How could such a thing find its way into the lazarette?" said the captain, addressing the second mate.

"God alone knows!" burst out the other. "It'll have come aboard masked in some way, and it deceived me. Unless there's the hand of a lumper in the job—does he know no more about it than what he says?" he cried, rounding upon me.

At this moment the steward came rushing from the companion way, and said to the captain, in a trembling voice, "The man lies dead in his bunk, sir, with his throat horribly cut."

"Come you along with us," said the captain, addressing me, and the whole of us, saving the carpenter and second mate, went below.

We walked along the corridor obedient to the captain's whispered injunction to tread lightly, and make no noise. The midnight lantern faintly illuminated the length of the long after passage. The steward conducted us to a cabin that was almost right aft, and threw open the door. A bracket lamp filled the interior with light. There were two bunks under the porthole, and in the lower bunk lay the figure of the man I had beheld in the lazarette. His throat was terribly gashed, and his right hand still grasped the razor with which the wound had been inflicted.

"Is that the man?" said the captain.

"That's the man," I answered, trembling from head to foot, and sick and faint with the horror of the sight.

"Steward, fetch the doctor," said the captain, "and tell the carpenter we shan't want any irons here."

The narrative of my tragic experience may be completed by the transcription of two newspaper accounts, which I preserve pasted in a commonplace book. The first is from the Sydney Morning Herald. After telling about the arrival of the Huntress, and the disembarkation of his Excellency and suite, the writer proceeds thus:—

"When the ship was five days out from the Thames an extraordinary incident occurred. A young man named William Peploe, a stowaway, whilst hidden in the lazarette of the vessel, saw a man enter the place in which he was hiding and attach a slow match and an infernal machine to a barrel of gun-

powder stored amidships of the lazarette, and, from what we can gather, on top of the cargo! When the man left the hold young Peploe heroically withdrew the match from the powder and carried the machine on deck. The youth described the man, who proved to be a second-class passenger, who had embarked under the name of John Howland. When the villain's cabin was entered he was found lying in his bunk dead, with a severe wound in his throat inflicted by his own hand. No reason is assigned for this dastardly attempt to destroy a valuable ship and cargo and a company of souls numbering two hundred and ten, though there seems little reason to doubt that the man was mad. It is certain that but for the fortunate circumstance of young Peploe lying hidden in the lazarette the ship's stern or side would have been blown out, and she must have gone down like a stone, carrying all hands with her. On the passengers in due course being apprised of their narrow escape, a purse of a hundred guineas was subscribed and presented by his Excellency to young Peploe. The captain granted him a free passage and provided him with a comfortable outfit from the ship's slop-chest. It is also understood that some situation under the Government has been promised to Mr. William Peploe in consideration of the extraordinary service rendered on this memorable occasion."

My next quotation is from the pages of the Nautical Magazine, dated two years subsequent to the publication of the above in the Australian paper:—

"A bottle was picked up in March last upon the beach of Terceira, one of the Azores, containing a paper bearing a narrative which, unless it be a hoax, seems to throw some light on the mysterious affair of the Huntress, for the particulars of which we refer our readers to our volume of last year. The paper, as transmitted by the British Consul, is as follows:—

"Ship *Huntress*. At sea, such and such a date, 1853.

"I, who am known on board this vessel as John Howland, am the writer of this document. Twenty years ago I was unjustly sentenced to a term of transportation across seas, and my treatment at Norfolk Island was such that I vowed by the God who made me to be revenged on the man who, acting on the representation of his creatures, had caused me to be sent from Hobart Town to that hellish penal settlement. That man, with his wife and children, attended by a suite, is a passenger in this ship, and I have concerted my plan to dispatch him and those who may be dear to him to that Devil to whom the wretch consigned my soul when he ordered me to be sent as a further punishment to Norfolk Island. The destruction of this ship is ensured. Nothing can avert it. A barrel of gunpowder was stowed by well-bribed hands in the East India Docks in the lazarette, to which part of the hold access is easy by means of a small trap door. I am writing this three-quarters of an hour before I proceed to the execution of my scheme, and the realization of my dream of vengeance. When I have completed this document I will place it in a bottle, which I shall carefully cork and seal and cast into the sea through my cabin porthole. I am sorry for the many who must suffer be-

cause of the sins of one; but that one must perish, and immediately, in which hope, craving that, when this paper is found it may be transmitted to the authorities at home, so that the fate of my bitter enemy may be known, I subscribe myself,

"Israel Thomas Wilkinson,
"Ex-Convict and Ticket-of-Leave Man."

The Young Sheep-Herder

The Caliph Hishám bin Abd al-Malik bin Marwan, was hunting one day, when he sighted an antelope and pursued it with his dogs. As he was following the quarry, he saw an Arab youth pasturing sheep and said to him, "Ho boy, up and after yonder antelope, for it escapeth me!" The youth raised his head to him and replied, "O ignorant of what to the deserving is due, thou lookest on me with disdain and speakest to me with contempt; thy speaking is that of a tyrant true and thy doing what an ass would do." Quoth Hisham, "Woe to thee, dost thou not know me?" Rejoined the youth, "Verily thine unmannerliness hath made thee known to me, in that thou spakest to me, without beginning by the salutation." Repeated the Caliph, "Fie upon thee! I am Hisham bin Abd al-Malik." "May Allah not favour thy dwelling-place," replied the Arab, "nor guard thine abiding place! How many are thy words and how few thy generous deeds!" Hardly had he ended speaking, when up came the troop from all sides and surrounded him as the white encircleth the black of the eye, all and each saying, "Peace be with thee, O Commander of the Faithful!" Quoth Hisham, "Cut short this talk and seize me yonder boy." So they laid hands on him; and when he saw the multitude of Chamberlains and Wazirs and Lords of State, he was in nowise concerned and questioned not of them, but let his chin drop on his breast and looked where his feet fell, till they brought him to the Caliph when he stood before him, with head bowed groundwards and saluted him not and spoke him not. So one of the eunuchs said to him, "O dog of the Arabs, what hindereth thy saluting the Commander of the Faithful?" The youth turned to him angrily and replied, "O packsaddle of an ass, it was the length of the way that hindered me from this and the steepness of the steps and the profuseness of my sweat." Then said Hisham (and indeed he was exceeding wroth), "O boy, verily thy days are come to their latest hour; thy hope is gone from thee and thy life is past out of thee." He answered, "By Allah, O Hisham, verily an my life-term be prolonged and Fate ordain not its cutting short, thy words irk me not, be they long or short." Then said the Chief Chamberlain to him, "Doth it befit thy degree, O vilest of the Arabs, to bandy words with the Commander of the Faithful?" He answered promptly, "Mayest thou meet with adversity and may woe and wailing never leave thee! Hast thou not heard the saying of Almighty Allah?:—One day, every soul shall come to defend itself."

Hereupon Hisham rose, in great wrath, and said, "O headsman, bring me the head of this lad; for indeed he exceedeth in talk, such as passeth conception." So the sworder took him and, making him kneel on the carpet of blood, drew his sword above him and said to the Caliph, "O commander of the Faithful, this thy slave is misguided and is on the way to his grave; shall I smite off his head and be quit of his blood?" "Yes," replied Hisham. He repeated his question and the Caliph again answered in the affirmative. Then he asked leave a third time; and the youth, knowing that, if the Caliph assented yet once more, it would be the signal of his death, laughed till his wisdom-teeth showed; whereupon Hisham's wrath redoubled and he said to him, "O boy, meseems thou art mad; seest thou not that thou art about to depart the world? Why then dost thou laugh in mockery of thyself?" He replied, "O Commander of the Faithful, if a larger life-term befel me, none can hurt me, great or small; but I have bethought me of some couplets, which do thou hear, for my death cannot escape thee." Quoth Hisham, "Say on and be brief"; so the Arab repeated these couplets:—

It happed one day a hawk pounced on a bird,
A wildling sparrow driven by destiny;
And held in pounces spake the sparrow thus,
E'en as the hawk rose read home to hie:—
"Scant flesh have I to fill the maw of thee
And for thy lordly food poor morsel I."
Then smiled the hawk in flattered vanity
And pride, so set the sparrow free to fly.

At this Hisham smiled and said, "By the truth of my kinship to the Apostle of Allah (whom Allah bless and keep!), had he spoken this speech at first and asked for aught except the Caliphate, verily I would have given it to him. Stuff his mouth with jewels, O eunuch and entreat him courteously"; so they did as he bade them and the Arab went his way.

A Piece of Bread

The young Duc de Hardimont happened to be at Aix in Savoy, whose waters he hoped would benefit his famous mare, Perichole, who had become wind-broken since the cold she had caught at the last Derby,—and was finishing his breakfast while glancing over the morning paper, when he read the news of the disastrous engagement at Reichshoffen.

He emptied his glass of chartreuse, laid his napkin upon the restaurant table, ordered his valet to pack his trunks, and two hours later took the express to Paris; arriving there, he hastened to the recruiting office and enlisted in a regiment of the line.

In vain had he led the enervating life of a fashionable swell—that was the word of the time—and had knocked about race-course stables from the age of nineteen to twenty-five. In circumstances like these, he could not forget

that Enguerrand de Hardimont died of the plague at Tunis the same day as Saint Louis, that Jean de Hardimont commanded the Free Companies under Du Guesclin, and that Françons-Henri de Hardimont was killed at Fontenoy with "Red" Maison. Upon learning that France had lost a battle on French soil, the young duke felt the blood mount to his face, giving him a horrible feeling of suffocation.

And so, early in November, 1870, Henri de Hardimont returned to Paris with his regiment, forming part of Vinoy's corps, and his company being the advance guard before the redoubt of Hautes Bruyères, a position fortified in haste, and which protected the cannon of Fort Bicêtre.

It was a gloomy place; a road planted with clusters of broom, and broken up into muddy ruts, traversing the leprous fields of the neighborhood; on the border stood an abandoned tavern, a tavern with arbors, where the soldiers had established their post. They had fallen back here a few days before; the grape-shot had broken down some of the young trees, and all of them bore upon their bark the white scars of bullet wounds. As for the house, its appearance made one shudder; the roof had been torn by a shell, and the walls seemed whitewashed with blood. The torn and shattered arbors under their network of twigs, the rolling of an upset cask, the high swing whose wet rope groaned in the damp wind, and the inscriptions over the door, furrowed by bullets; "Cabinets de societé—Absinthe —Vermouth—Vin à 60 cent. le litre"—encircling a dead rabbit painted over two billiard cues tied in a cross by a ribbon,—all this recalled with cruel irony the popular entertainment of former days. And over all, a wretched winter sky, across which rolled heavy leaden clouds, an odious sky, angry and hateful.

At the door of the tavern stood the young duke, motionless, with his gun in his shoulder-belt, his cap over his eyes, his benumbed hands in the pockets of his red trousers, and shivering in his sheepskin coat. He gave himself up to his sombre thoughts, this defeated soldier, and looked with sorrowful eyes toward a line of hills, lost in the fog, where could be seen each moment, the flash and smoke of a Krupp gun, followed by a report.

Suddenly he felt hungry.

Stooping, he drew from his knapsack, which stood near him leaning against the wall, a piece of ammunition bread, and as he had lost his knife, he bit off a morsel and slowly ate it.

But after a few mouthfuls, he had enough of it; the bread was hard and had a bitter taste. No fresh would be given until the next morning's distribution, so the commissary officer had willed it. This was certainly a very hard life sometimes. The remembrance of former breakfasts came to him, such as he had called "hygienic," when, the day after too over-heating a supper, he would seat himself by a window on the ground floor of the Café-Anglais, and be served with a cutlet, or buttered eggs with asparagus tips, and the butler, knowing his tastes, would bring him a fine bottle of old Léoville, lying in its basket, and which he would pour out with the greatest care. The deuce take it! That was a good time, all the same, and he would never become accustomed to this life of wretchedness.

And, in a moment of impatience, the young man threw the rest of his bread into the mud.

At the same moment a soldier of the line came from the tavern, stooped and picked up the bread, drew back a few steps, wiped it with his sleeve and began to devour it eagerly.

Henri de Hardimont was already ashamed of his action, and now with a feeling of pity, watched the poor devil who gave proof of such a good appetite. He was a tall, large young fellow, but badly made; with feverish eyes and a hospital beard, and so thin that his shoulder-blades stood out beneath his well-worn cape.

"You are very hungry?" he said, approaching the soldier.

"As you see," replied the other with his mouth full.

"Excuse me then. For if I had known that you would like the bread, I would not have thrown it away."

"It does not harm it," replied the soldier, "I am not dainty."

"No matter," said the gentleman, "it was wrong to do so, and I reproach myself. But I do not wish you to have a bad opinion of me, and as I have some old cognac in my can, let us drink a drop together."

The man had finished eating. The duke and he drank a mouthful of brandy; the acquaintance was made.

"What is your name?" asked the soldier of the line.

"Hardimont," replied the duke, omitting his title. "And yours?"

"Jean-Victor—I have just entered this company—I am just out of the ambulance—I was wounded at Châtillon—oh! but it was good in the ambulance, and in the infirmary they gave me horse bouillon. But I had only a scratch, and the major signed my dismissal. So much the worse for me! Now I am going to commence to be devoured by hunger again—for, believe me, if you will, comrade, but, such as you see me, I have been hungry all my life."

The words were startling, especially to a Sybarite who had just been longing for the kitchen of the Café-Anglais, and the Duc de Hardimont looked at his companion in almost terrified amazement. The soldier smiled sadly, showing his hungry, wolf-like teeth, as white as his sickly face, and, as if understanding that the other expected something further in the way of explanation or confidence:

"Come," said he, suddenly ceasing his familiar way of speaking, doubtless divining that his companion belonged to the rich and happy; "let us walk along the road to warm our feet, and I will tell you things, which probably you have never heard of—I am called Jean-Victor, that is all, for I am a foundling, and my only happy remembrance is of my earliest childhood, at the Asylum. The sheets were white on our little beds in the dormitory; we played in a garden under large trees, and a kind Sister took care of us, quite young and as pale as a wax-taper—she died afterwards of lung trouble—I was her favorite, and would rather walk by her than play with the other children, because she used to draw me to her side and lay her warm thin hand on my forehead. But when I was twelve years old, after my first communion, there was nothing but poverty. The managers put me as apprentice with a chair mender in Faubourg Saint-Jacques. That is not a trade, you know. it is

impossible to earn one's living at it, and as proof of it, the greater part of the time the master was only able to engage the poor little boys from the Blind Asylum. It was there that I began to suffer with hunger. The master and mistress, two old Limousins—afterwards murdered, were terrible misers, and the bread, cut in tiny pieces for each meal, was kept under lock and key the rest of the time. You should have seen the mistress at supper time serving the soup, sighing at each ladleful she dished out. The other apprentices, two blind boys, were less unhappy; they were not given more than I, but they could not see the reproachful look the wicked woman used to give me as she handed me my plate. And then, unfortunately, I was always so terribly hungry. Was it my fault, do you think? I served there for three years, in a continual fit of hunger. Three years! And one can learn the work in one month. But the managers could not know everything, and had no suspicion that the children were abused. Ah! you were astonished just now when you saw me take the bread out of the mud? I am used to that for I have picked up enough of it; and crusts from the dust, and when they were too hard and dry, I would soak them all night in my basin. I had windfalls sometimes, such as pieces of bread nibbled at the ends, which the children would take out of their baskets and throw on the sidewalks as they came from school. I used to try to prowl around there when I went on errands. At last my time was ended at this trade by which no man can support himself. Well, I did many other things, for I was willing enough to work. I served the masons; I have been shop-boy, floor-polisher, I don't know what all! But, pshaw; to-day, work is lacking, another time I lose my place. Briefly, I never have had enough to eat. Heavens! how often have I been crazy with hunger as I have passed the bakeries! Fortunately for me, at these times I have always remembered the good Sister at the Asylum, who so often told me to be honest, and I seemed to feel her warm little hand upon my forehead. At last, when I was eighteen I enlisted; you know as well as I do, that the trooper has only just enough. Now,—I could almost laugh—here is the siege and famine! You see, I did not lie, when I told you just now that I have always, always, been hungry!"

The young duke had a kind heart and was profoundly moved by this terrible story, told him by a man like himself, by a soldier whose uniform made him his equal. It was even fortunate for the phlegm of this dandy, that the night wind dried the tears which dimmed his eyes.

"Jean-Victor," said he, ceasing in his turn, by a delicate tact, to speak familiarly to the foundling, "if we survive this dreadful war, we will meet again, and I hope that I may be useful to you. But, in the meantime, as there is no bakery but the commissary, and as my ration of bread is twice too large for my delicate appetite,—it is understood, is it not?—we will share it like good comrades."

It was strong and hearty, the handclasp which followed: then, harassed and worn by their frequent watches and alarms, as night fell, they returned to the tavern, where twelve soldiers were sleeping on the straw; and throwing

themselves down side by side, they were soon sleeping soundly.

Toward midnight Jean-Victor awoke, being hungry probably. The wind had scattered the clouds, and a ray of moonlight made its way into the room through a hole in the roof, lighting up the handsome blonde head of the young duke, who was sleeping like an Endymion.

Still touched by the kindness of his comrade, Jean-Victor as gazing at him with admiration, when the sergeant of the platoon opened the door and called the five men who were to relieve the sentinels of the out-posts. The duke was of the number, but he did not waken when his name was called.

"Hardimont, stand up!" repeated the non-commissioned officer.

"If you are willing, sergeant," said Jean-Victor rising, "I will take his duty, he is sleeping so soundly—and he is my comrade."

"As you please."

The five men left, and the snoring recommenced.

But half an hour later the noise of near and rapid firing burst upon the night. In an instant every man was on his feet, and each with his hand on the chamber of his gun stepped cautiously out looking earnestly along the road, lying white in the moonlight.

"What time is it?" asked the duke. "I was to go on duty to-night."

"Jean-Victor went in your place."

At that moment a soldier was seen running toward them along the road.

"What is it?" they cried as he stopped, out of breath.

"The Prussians have attacked us, let us fall back to the redoubt."

"And your comrades?"

"They are coming—all but poor Jean-Victor."

"Where is he?" cried the duke.

"Shot through the head with a bullet —died without a word!—ough!"

* * * * * * *

One night last winter, the Duc de Hardimont left his club about two o'clock in the morning, with his neighbor, Count de Saulnes; the duke had lost some hundred louis, and had a slight headache.

"If you are willing, André," he said to his companion, "we will go home on foot—I need the air."

"Just as you please, I am willing, although the walking may be bad."

They dismissed their coupés, turned up the collars of their overcoats, and set off toward the Madeleine. Suddenly an object rolled before the duke which he had struck with the toe of his boot; it was a large piece of bread spattered with mud.

Then to his amazement, Monsieur de Saulnes saw the Duc de Hardimont pick up the piece of bread, wipe it carefully with his handkerchief embroidered with his armorial bearings, and place it on a bench, in full view under the gas-light.

"What did you do that for?" asked the count, laughing heartily, "are you crazy?"

"It is in memory of a poor fellow who died for me," replied the duke in a voice which trembled slightly, "do not laugh, my friend, it offends me."

A Society Adventure

On an isle of refuge, a Patmos mercifully set in the midst of an ever-roaring torrent of hansoms going from the north to the south of London and *vice versa*, two men, who had not seen each other for many years, met face to face one sultry afternoon in early autumn. They recognized each other simultaneously, and shook hands.

"My dear Villiers," said the elder of the two, a grizzled man of forty, "it must be seven or eight years since we have seen anything of each other. I am glad to meet you—extremely glad to meet you again."

"You are very kind, Richardson. As you say we managed to lose sight of each other. One does in London, I think, almost without knowing it. And how are you getting on?"

"Thank you, moderately well, I am happy to say. As you know, I am in the India trade and of late years I have managed to increase my connection to a great extent. At present we are doing, I think I may say, respectably. Have you entered any business?"

Villiers laughed; merrily, like a boy. "No, Richardson. I have no time for business; I have definitely chosen a great subject, the study of which will occupy me for the rest of my life."

"Indeed; a scientific subject I presume?"

"Yes, the fact is I am a student of London; I survey mankind from Cricklewood to Tooting, from Turnham Green to the Isle of Dogs. Can you speak the French of Soho? Do you understand Yiddish?"

"Certainly not. Mr. Jones, our corresponding clerk, is a good linguist; but I do not remember his speaking of the dialects you mention. I am afraid, Villiers, you are still rather an idler; I had hoped that when your poor father died you would have entered the China trade."

"No, I sold my interest in the business. In one sense my interest in it was very small indeed, but from a practical point of view it yields me a good income. Have you still got your rooms at Clement's Inn?"

Mr. Richardson blushed. He was rather a grim-looking man, with a straight mouth and a forbidding whisker. He was thoroughly good natured but dry and devoid of humor. But he blushed and a queer sly smile played about his lips.

"No, Villiers, I don't live in Clement's Inn now. I am married."

"You, Richardson! You married! You really astonish me. I thought you were the typical bachelor. I must congratulate you. When did the event take place?"

"We were married three months ago. My wife and I met quite by accident; in fact, I was enabled to render her some assistance in a dispute with an insolent cab driver; and the acquaintance ripened into affection. I am a very happy man, Villiers."

"You deserve to be, Richardson, you are a good fellow. I should like to meet your wife."

"So you shall. Are you free tomorrow? Good; then come down and dine with us at six. Here is my card."

The two friends parted; each darting

through a momentary gap in the race of cabs. Villiers looked at the card; it referred him to "The Limes, Angelina Terrace, Clapham." He wondered exceedingly what manner of wife this good-hearted, dry, city man had found for himself; and his wonder sharpened the sauces at his little dinner at the Italian Restaurant in Regent Street and gave additional zest to the Falerno. He was still wondering as he walked out of Clapham station the next day.

Villiers was some time in finding Angelina Terrace. The neighborhood was a very new one; two or three old mansions, with their pleasant lawns and cedars, had been "developed"; the result was a maze of brand new streets and terraces, street like to street, and terrace to terrace, and every house built after the same pattern in blinding white brick, with red facings and green Venetian blinds. The inhabitants thought it a cheerful neighborhood, artists swore at it, and Villiers accepted it as a fresh chapter in his great study. He found the desired terrace at last and was shown into the drawing room at the Limes. He had barely time to notice that the most prominent work on the polished round table was a "Memoir of the Rev. Alex. Macaw, of Dunblather," when Richardson came in, beaming with pleasure.

"That's right," he said, "you have broken the ice, and I hope we shall often see you. Nice cheerful place, isn't it; better than the dingy old red brick inn, eh? Here's my wife. This is my old friend, Villiers, my dear; I was just saying that I hoped he would come down often."

Villiers had started as if he had received an electric shock, as the pretty, though demure looking woman entered the room. He managed to join pretty well in the indifferent conversation which Richardson kept up during the dinner. Mrs. Richardson was silent; indeed her manner to Villiers was markedly cold. Her husband addressed himself to her now and again, calling her "my dear Agnes," but Villiers was thinking all the while of one Mary Reynolds; of certain merry dinners at this or that restaurant; of little trips to Hampton and Richmond; of the scent of patchouli, and the green-room at the Gaiety. He seemed to hear the popping of champagne corks (Mrs. Richardson drank a little water in a wine glass) and certain strains of French songs of a *fin de siécle* character; Richardson's quiet stream of talk sounded idly in his ears, like a brook murmuring far away. Villiers looked furtively at the grave lady at the head of the table; she was wearing a diamond brooch he himself had given to Mary Reynolds. He gasped for breath. "Yes," Richardson was saying, "my wife has some really beautiful jewelry, which she inherited from a distant cousin: Sir Lawrence Buller of Beaulieu Park, in Norfolk. That brooch, which I perceive you are admiring, is by no means the finest piece. After dinner, my dear, you must show Villiers your jewelry; those pearl necklaces are truly magnificent."

"I don't think Mr. Villiers takes much interest in such matters."

The tone was hard and threatening. Villiers bowed and smiled in a dazed sort of way; the champagne, foaming bright in the glasses, danced before his eyes, and his ears were ringing with the

daring *chanson*. What a strong smell of patchouli there was in the room; he felt stifled.

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"You don't seem quite the thing to-night, Villiers," said Mr. Richardson, as he showed his guest out, "Take care of the steps."

"Thanks, I'm all right now; I think the heat has been too much for me. Trying weather, isn't it? Good night, Richardson."

Villiers went home in a kind of stupor; he felt sure he had not been misled by a chance likeness. He remembered the brooch too well. A few days later an irresistible impulse made him find out Mr. Richardson's city address and call upon him there. The worthy man seemed constrained in his manner; he was kind, but looked anxious, like a man charged with some unpleasant duty. The climax came when Villiers proposed to accompany him home and take "pot-luck."

"My dear Villiers, you know I have always liked you much; your poor father was very kind to me; it's a great pity. But, to tell the truth, Agnes is very particular; she evidently heard some stories about you (I am afraid, Villiers, you have never lived a very strict life), and she says that as a married woman, she would not care to meet you again. It grieves me, I assure you, to have to say this; but after all, one would not wish one's wife . . ."

Villiers had been staring in stupid astonishment, but at this point he burst into a wild peal of laughter, which echoed above the clamor of Cornhill. He roared and roared again, till the tears ran down his cheeks.

"My dear Richardson," he said at last, "I congratulate you again; you have married a wonderful woman. Good-bye."

Villiers went on his way, and as he disappeared into a hansom he was still bubbling over with unconquerable mirth.

Corporal Flint's Murder

HALF an hour passed before the Indian chiefs commenced their proceedings with the corporal. The delay was owing to a consultation, in which Ungque The Weasel had proposed despatching a party to the castle, and thus make a common destruction of the remaining pale-faces known to be in that part of the Openings. Peter did not dare to oppose this scheme, himself; but he so managed as to get Crowsfeather to do it, without bringing himself into the foreground. His influence prevailed, and it was decided to torture this one captive, and to secure his scalp, before they proceeded to work their will on the others. Ungque was commissioned to state to the captive the intentions of his captors.

"Brother," commenced The Weasel, placing himself directly in front of the corporal, "I am about to speak to you. A wise warrior opens his ears, when he hears the voice of his enemy. He

may learn something it will be good for him to know. It will be good for you to know what I am about to say.

"Brother, you are a pale-face, and we are Injins. You wish to get our hunting-grounds, and we wish to keep them. To keep them, it has become necessary to take your scalp. I hope you are ready to let us have it."

The corporal had but an indifferent knowledge of the Indian language, but he comprehended all that was uttered on this occasion. Interest quickened his faculties, and no part of what was said was lost. The gentle, slow, deliberate manner in which The Weasel delivered himself, contributed to his means of understanding. He was fortunately prepared for what he heard, and the announcement of his approaching fate did not disturb him to the degree of betraying weakness. This last was a triumph in which the Indians delighted, though they ever showed the most profound respect for such of their victims as manifested a manly fortitude. It was necessary to reply, which the corporal did in English, knowing that several present could interpret his words. With a view to render this the more easy, he spoke in fragments of sentences, and with great deliberation.

"Injins," returned the corporal, "you surrounded me, and I have been taken prisoner—had there been a platoon on us, you mightn't have made out quite so well. It's no great victory for three hundred warriors to overcome a single man. If I could have half an hour's work upon you with only half of our late company, I think we should lower your conceit. But that is impossible, and so you may do just what you please with me. I ask no favors."

Although this answer was very imperfectly translated, it awakened a good deal of admiration. A man who could look death so closely in the face, with so much steadiness, became a sort of hero in Indian eyes; and with the North American savage, fortitude is a virtue not inferior to courage. Murmurs of approbation were heard, and Ungque was privately requested to urge the captive further, in order to see how far present appearances were likely to be maintained.

"Brother, I have said that we are Injins," resumed The Weasel, with an air so humble, and a voice so meek, that a stranger might have supposed he was consoling instead of endeavoring to intimidate, the prisoner. "It is true. We are nothing but poor, ignorant Injins. We can only torment our prisoners after Injin fashion. If we were pale-faces, we might do better. We did not torment the medicine-priest. We were afraid he would laugh at our mistakes. He knew a great deal. We know but little. We do as well as we know how.

"Brother, when Injins do as well as they know how, a warrior should forget their mistakes. We wish to torment you, in a way to prove that you are all over man. We wish so to torment you that you will stand up under the pain in such a way that it will make our young men think your mother was not a squaw—that there is no woman in you. We do this for our own honor, as well as for yours. It will be an honor to us to have such a captive; it will be an honor to you to be such a captive. We shall do as well as we know how.

"Brother, it is most time to begin. The tormenting will last a long time. We must not let the medicine-priest

get too great a start on the path to the happy hunting-grounds of your——"

Here, a most unexpected interruption occurred, that effectually put a stop to the eloquence of Ungque. In his desire to make an impression, the savage approached within reach of the captive's arm, while his own mind was intent on the words that he hoped would make the prisoner quail. The corporal kept his eye on that of the speaker, charming him, as it were, into a riveted gaze, in return. Watching his opportunity, he caught the tomahawk from the Weasel's belt, and by a single blow, felled him dead at his feet. Not content with this, the old soldier now bounded forward, striking right and left, inflicting six or eight wounds on others, before he could be again arrested, disarmed, and bound. While the last was doing, *Peter withdrew,* unobserved.

Many were the "hughs" and other exclamations of admiration that succeeded this display of desperate manhood! The body of The Weasel was removed, and interred, while the wounded withdrew to attend to their hurts; leaving the arena to the rest assembled there. As for the corporal, he was pretty well blown, and, in addition to being now bound hand and foot, his recent exertions, which were terrific while they lasted, effectually incapacitated him from making any move, so long as he was thus exhausted and confined.

A council was now held by the principal chiefs. Ungque had few friends. In this, he shared the fate of most demagogues, who are commonly despised even by those they lead and deceive. No one regretted him much, and some were actually glad at his fate. But the dignity of the conquerors must be vindicated. It would never do to allow a pale-face to obtain so great an advantage, and not take a signal vengeance for his deeds. After a long consultation, it was determined to subject the captive to the trial by saplings, and thus see if he could bear the torture without complaining. As some of our readers may not understand what this fell mode of tormenting is, it may be necessary to explain.

There is scarcely a method of inflicting pain, that comes within the compass of their means, that the North American Indians have not essayed on their enemies. When the infernal ingenuity that is exercised on these occasions fails of its effect, the captives themselves have been heard to suggest other means of torturing that *they* have known practised successfully by their own people. There is often a strange strife between the tormentors and the tormented; the one to manifest skill in inflicting pain, and the other to manifest fortitude in enduring it. As has just been said, quite as much renown is often acquired by the warrior, in setting all the devices of his conquerors at defiance, while subject to their hellish attempts, as in deeds of arms. It might be more true to say that such *was* the practice among the Indians, than to say, at the present time, that such *is;* for it is certain that civilization in its approaches, while it has in many particulars even degraded the red man, has had a silent effect in changing and mitigating many of his fiercer customs—this perhaps among the rest. It is probable that the more distant tribes still resort to all these ancient usages; but it is both hoped and believed that those nearer to the whites do not.

The "torture by saplings" is one of those modes of inflicting pain that would naturally suggest themselves to savages. Young trees that do not stand far apart are trimmed of their branches, and brought nearer to each other by bending their bodies; the victim is then attached to both trunks, sometimes by his extended arms, at others by his legs, or by whatever part of the frame cruelty can suggest, when the saplings are released, and permitted to resume their upright positions. Of course, the sufferer is lifted from the earth, and hangs suspended by his limbs, with a strain on them that soon produces the most intense anguish. The celebrated punishment of the "knout" partakes a good deal of this same character of suffering. Bough of the Oak now approached the corporal, to let him know how high an honor was in reserve for him.

"Brother," said this ambitious orator, "you are a brave warrior. You have done well. Not only have you killed one of our chiefs, but you have wounded several of our young men. No one but a brave could have done this. You have forced us to bind you, lest you might kill some more. It is not often that captives do this. Your courage has caused us to consult *how* we might best torture you, in a way most to manifest your manhood. After talking together, the chiefs have decided that a man of your firmness ought to be hung between two young trees. We have found the trees, and have cut off their branches. You can see them. If they were a little larger their force would be greater, and they would give you more pain—would be more worthy of you; but these are the largest saplings we could find. Had there been any larger, we would have let you have them. We wish to do you honor, for you are a bold warrior, and worthy to be well tormented.

"Brother, look at these saplings! They are tall and straight. When they are bent by many hands, they will come together. Take away the hands, and they will become straight again. Your arms must then keep them together. We wish we had some pappooses here, that they might shoot arrows into your flesh. That would help much to torment you. You cannot have this honor, for we have no pappooses. We are afraid to let our young men shoot arrows into your flesh. They are strong, and might kill you. We wish you to die between the saplings, as is your right, being so great a brave.

"Brother, we think much better of you since you killed The Weasel, and hurt our young men. If all your warriors at Chicago had been as bold as you, Black-Bird would not have taken that fort. You would have saved many scalps. This encourages us. It makes us think the Great Spirit means to help us, and that we shall kill all the pale-faces. When we get further into your settlements, we do not expect to meet many such braves as you. They tell us we shall then find men who will run, and screech like women. It will not be a pleasure to torment such men. We had rather torment a bold warrior, like you, who makes us admire him for his manliness. We love our squaws, but not in the war-path. They are best in the lodges; here we want nothing but men. You are a man—a brave—we honor you.

We think, notwithstanding, we shall yet make you weak. It will not be easy, yet we hope to do it. We shall try. We may not think quite so well of you, if we do it; but we shall always call you a brave. A man is not a stone. We can all feel, and when we have done all that is in our power, no one can do more. It is so with Injins; we think it must be so with pale-faces. We mean to try and see how it is."

The corporal understood very little of this harangue, though he perfectly comprehended the preparations of the saplings, and Bough of the Oak's allusions to *them*. He was in a cold sweat at the thought, for resolute as he was, he foresaw sufferings that human fortitude could hardly endure. In this state of the case, and in the frame of mind he was in, he had recourse to an expedient of which he had often heard, and which he thought might now be practised to some advantage. It was to open upon the savages with abuse, and to exasperate them, by taunts and sarcasm, to such a degree as might induce some of the weaker members of the tribe to dispatch him on the spot. As the corporal, with the perspective of the saplings before his eyes, manifested a good deal of ingenuity on this occasion, we shall record some of his efforts.

"D'ye call yourselves chiefs and warriors?" he began, upon a pretty high key. "I call ye squaws! There is not a man among ye. Dogs would be the best name. You are poor Injins. A long time ago, the pale-faces came here in two or three little canoes. They were but a handful, and you were plentier than prairie wolves. Your bark could be heard throughout the land. Well, what did this handful of pale-faces? It drove your fathers before them, until they got all the best of the hunting-grounds. Not an Injin of you all, now, ever get down on the shores of the great salt lake, unless to sell brooms and baskets, and then he goes sneaking like a wolf after a sheep. You have forgotten how clams and oysters taste. Your fathers had as many of them as they could eat; but not one of *you* ever tasted them. The pale-faces eat them all. If an Injun asked for one, they would throw the shell at his head, and call him a dog.

"Do you think that my chiefs would hang one of you between two such miserable saplings as these? No! They would scorn to practice such pitiful torture. They would bring the tops of two tall pines together, trees a hundred and fifty feet high, and put their prisoner on the topmost boughs, for the crows and ravens to pick his eyes out. But you are miserable Injins! You know nothing. If you know'd any better, would you act such poor torment ag'in' a great brave? I spit upon ye, and call you squaws. The pale-faces have made women of ye. They have taken out your hearts, and put pieces of dog's flesh in their places."

Here the corporal, who delivered himself with an animation suited to his language, was obliged to pause, literally for want of breath. Singular as it may seem, this tirade excited great admiration among the savages. It is true, that very few understood what was said; perhaps no one understood *all*, but the manner was thought to be admirable. When some of the lan-

guage was interpreted a deep but smothered resentment was felt; more especially at the taunts touching the manner in which the whites had overcome the red men. Truth is hard to be borne, and the individual, or people, who will treat a thousand injurious lies with contempt, feel all their ire aroused at one reproach that has its foundation in fact. Nevertheless, the anger that the corporal's words did, in truth, awaken, was successfully repressed, and he had the disappointment of seeing that his life was spared for the torture.

"Brother," said Bough of the Oak, again placing himself before the captive, "you have a stout heart. It is made of stone, and not of flesh. If our hearts be of dog's meat, yours is of stone. What you say is true. The pale-faces *did* come at first in two or three canoes, and there were but few of them. We are ashamed, for it is true. A few pale-faces drove toward the setting sun many Injins. But we cannot be driven any further. We mean to stop here, and begin to take all the scalps we can. A great chief, who belongs to no one tribe, but belongs to all tribes, who speaks all tongues, has been sent by the Great Spirit to arouse us. He has done it. You know him. He came from the head of the lake with you, and kept his eye on your scalp. He has meant to take it from the first. He waited only for an opportunity. That opportunity has come, and we now mean to do as he has told us we ought to do. This is right. Squaws are in a hurry; warriors know how to wait. We would kill you at once, and hang your scalp on our pole, but it would not be right. We wish to do what is right. If we *are* poor Injins, and know but little, we know what is right. It is right to torment so great a brave, and we mean to do it. It is only just to you to do so. An old warrior who has seen so many enemies, and who has so big a heart, ought not to be knocked in the head like a pappoose or a squaw. It is his right to be tormented. We are getting ready, and shall soon begin. If my brother can tell us a new way of tormenting, we are willing to try it. Should we not make out as well as pale-faces, my brother will remember who we are. We mean to do our best, and we hope to make his heart soft. If we do this, great will be our honor. Should we not do it, we cannot help it. We shall try."

It was now the corporal's turn to put in a rebutter. This he did without any failure in will or performance. By this time he was so well warmed as to think or care very little about the saplings, and to overlook the pain they might occasion.

"Dogs can do little but bark; 'specially Injin dogs," he said. "Injins themselves are little better than their own dogs. They can bark, but they don't know how to bite. You have many great chiefs here. Some are panthers, and some bears, and some buffaloes; but where are your weasels? I have fit you now these twenty years, and never have I known ye to stand up to the baggonet. It's not Injin natur' to do *that*."

Here the corporal, without knowing it, made some such reproach to the aboriginal warriors of America as the English used to throw into the teeth of ourselves—that of not standing up to a weapon which neither party possessed. It was matter of great

triumph that the Americans would not stand the charge of the bayonet at the renowned fight on Breed's, for instance, when it is well known that not one man in five among the colonists had any such weapon at all to "stand up" with. A different story was told at Guildford, and Stony Point, and Eutaw, and Bennington, and Bemis' Heights, and fifty other places that might be named, after the troops were furnished with bayonets. *Then* it was found that the Americans could use them as well as others, and so might it have proved with the red men, though their discipline, or mode of fighting, scarce admitted of such systematic charges. All this, however, the corporal overlooked, much as if he were a regular historian who was writing to make out a case.

"Harkee, brother, since you *will* call me brother; though, Heaven be praised, not a drop of nigger or Injin blood runs in *my* veins," resumed the corporal. "Harken, friend redskin, answer me one thing. Did you ever hear of such a man as Mad Anthony? He was the tickler for your infernal tribes! You pulled no saplings together for him. He put you up with 'the long-knives and leather-stockings,' and you outrun his fleetest horses. I was with him, and saw more naked backs than naked faces among your people, that day. Your Great Bear got a rap on his nose that sent him to his village yelping like a cur."

Again was the corporal compelled to stop to take breath. The allusion to Wayne, and his defeat of the Indians excited so much ire, that several hands grasped knives and tomahawks, and one arrow was actually drawn nearly to the head; but the frown of Bear's Meat prevented any outbreak, or actual violence. It was deemed prudent, however, to put an end to this scene, lest the straightforward corporal, who laid it on heavily, and who had so much to say about Indian defeats, might actually succeed in touching some festering wound that would bring him to his death at once. It was, accordingly, determined to proceed with the torture of the saplings without further delay.

The corporal was removed accordingly, and placed between the two bended trees, which were kept together by withes around their tops. An arm of the captive was bound tightly at the wrist to the top of each tree, so that his limbs were to act as the only tie between the saplings, as soon as the withes should be cut. The Indians now worked in silence, and the matter was getting to be much too serious for the corporal to indulge in any more words. The cold sweat returned, and many an anxious glance was cast by the veteran on the fell preparations. Still he maintained appearances, and when all was ready, not a man there was aware of the agony of dread which prevailed in the breast of the victim. It was not death that he feared as much as suffering. A few minutes, the corporal well knew, would make the pain intolerable, while he saw no hope of putting a speedy end to his existence. A man might live hours in such a situation. Then it was that the teachings of childhood were revived in the bosom of this hardened man, and he remembered the Being that died for *him,* in common with the rest of the human race, on the tree. The seeming similarity of his own execution struck

his imagination, and brought a tardy but faint recollection of those lessons that had lost most of their efficacy in the wickedness and impiety of camps. His soul struggled for relief in that direction, but the present scene was too absorbing to admit of its lifting itself so far above his humanity.

"Warrior of the pale-faces," said Bough of the Oak, "we are going to cut the withes. You will then be where a brave man will want all his courage. If you are firm, we will do you honor; if you faint and screech, our young men will laugh at you. This is the way with Injins. They honor braves; they point the finger at cowards."

Here a sign was made by Bear's Meat, and a warrior raised the tomahawk that was to separate the fastenings. His hand was in the very act of descending, when the crack of a rifle was heard, and a little smoke rose out of the thicket, near the spot where the bee-hunter and the corporal, himself, had remained so long hid, on the occasion of the council first held in that place. The tomahawk fell, however, the withes were parted, and up flew the saplings, with a violence that threatened to tear the arms of the victim out of their sockets.

The Indians listened, expecting the screeches and groans;—they gazed, hoping to witness the writhings of their captive. But they were disappointed. There hung the body, its arms distended, still holding the tops of the saplings bowed, but not a sign of life was seen. A small line of blood trickled down the forehead, and above it was the nearly imperceptible hole made by the passage of a bullet. The head itself had fallen forward, and a little on one shoulder. The corporal had escaped the torments reserved for him, by this friendly blow.

King of the Emerald Sea

DALAL was a little girl, the daughter of a king, who found a spider in her room, and put it into a jar of oil, where it remained till Dalal was twenty years old, when it burst the jar, and emerged in the form of a horned buffalo. The king ordered the hide to be hung at the gate of the palace, and proclaimed that anyone who could discover what the skin was should marry his daughter, but whoever tried and failed should lose his head. Thirty-nine suitors thus perished, when a Ghúl passed by in the form of a man, who knew the secret. He took Dalal home with him and brought her a man's head, but as she would not eat it, he brought her a sheep. He then visited her under the forms of her mother and her two aunts, and told her that her husband was a Ghúl; but she refused to believe it until the third visit. Then he was angry; but she begged him to let her go to the bath before she was eaten. He consented, took her to a bath, and sat at the door; but she rubbed herself with mud, changed clothes with an old lupine-seller, and escaped for a time. She reached a palace which she would not enter until she was invited by the Prince himself, who then proposed to marry her, but on the wedding day, her hus-

band, having tracked her out, contrived that another Ghúl in the form of a man should present him to the king in the form of a sheep, pretending that he had been reared in a harem, and would bleat so loud that nobody could sleep, unless he was tethered in the women's apartments. At night the Ghúl carried off Dalal from beside the prince to the adjoining room, but she begged to be allowed to retire for a few moments, when she called upon Saint Zaynab for help, who sent one of her sisters a Jinniyah. She clove the wall, and asked Dalal to promise to give her her first child. She then gave her a piece of wood to throw into the mouth of the Ghúl when he opened his mouth to eat her. He fell on the ground senseless, and Dalal woke up the prince who slew him. But when Dalal brought forth a daughter whom she gave to the Jinniyah, her mother-in-law declared that Dalal herself was a Ghúlah, and she was banished to the kitchen, where she peeled onions for ten years. At the end of this time the Jinniyah again clove the wall, and brought back the young princess, who was introduced to her father, who took Dalal again into favour. Meantime the sultan of the Jinn sent for the Jinniyah, for his son was ill, and could only be cured by a cup of water from the Sea of Emeralds; and this could only be obtained by a daughter of mankind. So the Jinniyah borrowed Dalal's daughter again, and took her to the sultan, who gave her a cup, and mounted her on a Jinni, warning her not to wet her fingers. But a wave touched the hand of the princess, which turned as green as clover. Every morning the Sea of Emerald is weighed by an officer to discover whether any has been stolen; and as soon as he discovered the deficiency, he took a platter of glass rings and bracelets, and went from palace to palace calling out, "Glass bracelets and rings, O young ladies." When he came to Dalal's palace, the young princess was looking out of the window, and insisted on going herself to try them on. She hesitated to show her right hand; and the spy knew that she was guilty, so he seized her hand, and sunk into the ground with her. He delivered her over to the servants of the Sea of Emerald, who would have beaten her, but the Jinn surrounded her, and prevented them. Then the King of the Sea of Emerald ordered her to be taken, bound into the bath, saying that he would follow in the form of a serpent, and devour her. But she recognised him by his green eyes, when he became a man, ordered her to be restored to her father, and afterwards married her. He gave forty camel loads of emeralds and jacinths as her dowry, and always visited her by night in the form of a winged serpent, entering and leaving by the window.

The Outlaws

A PEASANT had killed a monk and fled to the woods. He became an outlaw, upon whose head a price was set. In the forest he met another fugitive, a young fisherman from one of the outermost islands, who had been accused of the theft of a herring net. The two became companions, cut themselves a

home in a cave, laid their nets together, cooked their food, made their arrows, and held watch one for the other. The peasant could never leave the forest. But the fisherman, whose crime was less serious, would now and then take upon his back the game they had killed, and would creep down to the more isolated houses on the outskirts of the village. In return for milk, butter, arrow-heads, and clothing he would sell his game, the black mountain cock, the moor hen, with her shining feathers, the toothsome doe, and the long-eared hare.

The cave which was their home cut down deep into a mountain-side. The entrance was guarded by wide slabs of stone and ragged thorn-bushes. High upon the hillside there stood a giant pine, and the chimney of the fireplace nestled among its coiled roots. Thus the smoke could draw up through the heavy hanging branches and fade unseen into the air. To reach their cave the men had to wade through the stream that sprang out from the hill slope. No pursuer thought of seeking their trail in this merry brooklet. At first they were hunted as wild animals are. The peasants of the district gathered to pursue them as if for a baiting of wolf or bear. The bowmen surrounded the wood while the spear carriers entered and left no thicket or ravine unsearched. The two outlaws cowered in their gloomy cave, panting in terror and listening breathlessly as the hunt passed on with noise and shouting over the mountain ranges.

For one long day the young fisherman lay motionless, but the murderer could stand it no longer and went out into the open where he could see his enemy. They discovered him and set after him, but this was far more to his liking than lying quiet in impotent terror. He fled before his pursuers, leaped the streams, slid down the precipices, climbed up perpendicular walls of rock. All his remarkable strength and skill awoke to energy under the spur of danger. His body became as elastic as a steel spring, his foot held firm, his hand grasped sure, his eye and ear were doubly sharp. He knew the meaning of every murmur in the foliage; he could understand the warning in an upturned stone.

When he had clambered up the side of a precipice he would stop to look down on his pursuers, greeting them with loud songs of scorn. When their spears sang above him in the air, he would catch them and hurl them back. As he crashed his way through tangled underbrush something within him seemed to sing a wild song of rejoicing. A gaunt, bare hilltop stretched itself through the forest, and all alone upon its crest there stood a towering pine. The red brown trunk was bare; in the thick grown boughs at the top a hawk's nest rocked in the breeze. So daring had the fugitive grown that on another day he climbed to the nest while his pursuers sought him in the woody slopes below. He sat there and twisted the necks of the young hawks as the hunt raged far beneath him. The old birds flew screaming about him in anger. They swooped past his face, they struck at his eyes with their beaks, beat at him with their powerful wings, and clawed great scratches in his weather-hardened skin. He battled with them laughing. He stood up in the rocking nest as he lunged at the birds with his knife, and he lost all thought of danger and pursuit

in the joy of the battle. When recollection came again and he turned to look for his enemies, the hunt had gone off in another direction. Not one of the pursuers had thought of raising his eyes to the clouds to see the prey hanging there, doing schoolboy deeds of recklessness while his life hung in the balance. But the man trembled from head to foot when he saw that he was safe. He caught for a support with his shaking hands; he looked down giddily from the height to which he had climbed. Groaning in fear of a fall, afraid of the birds, afraid of the possibility of being seen, weakened through terror of everything and anything, he slid back down the tree trunk. He laid himself flat upon the earth and crawled over the loose stones until he reached the underbrush. There he hid among the tangled branches of the young pines, sinking down, weak and helpless, upon the soft moss. A single man might have captured him.

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Tord was the name of the fisherman. He was but sixteen years old, but was strong and brave. He had now lived for a whole year in the wood.

The peasant's name was Berg, and they had called him "The Giant." He was handsome and well-built, the tallest and strongest man in the entire county. He was broad-shouldered and yet slender. His hands were delicate in shape, as if they had never known hard work, his hair was brown, his face soft-coloured. When he had lived for some time in the forest, his look of strength was awe-inspiring. His eyes grew piercing under bushy brows wrinkled by great muscles over the forehead. His lips were more firmly set than before, his face more haggard, with deepened hollows at the temples, and his strongly marked cheekbones stood out plainly. All the softer curves of his body disappeared, but the muscles grew strong as steel. His hair turned gray rapidly.

Tord had never seen any one so magnificent and so mighty before. In his imagination, his companion towered high as the forest, strong as the raging surf. He served him humbly, as he would have served a master, he revered him as he would have revered a god. It seemed quite natural that Tord should carry the hunting spear, that he should drag the game home, draw the water, and build the fire. Berg, the Giant, accepted all these services, but scarce threw the boy a friendly word. He looked upon him with contempt, as a common thief.

The outlaws did not live by pillage, but supported themselves by hunting and fishing. Had not Berg killed a holy man, the peasants would soon have tired of the pursuit and left them to themselves in the mountains. But they feared disaster for the villages if he who had laid hands upon a servant of God should go unpunished. When Tord took his game down into the valley they would offer him money and a pardon for himself if he would lead them to the cave of the Giant, that they might catch the latter in his sleep. But the boy refused, and if they followed him he would lead them astray until they gave up the pursuit.

Once Berg asked him whether the peasants had ever tried to persuade him to betrayal. When he learned what reward they had promised, he said scornfully that Tord was a fool not to accept such offers. Tord looked at him

with something in his eyes that Berg, the Giant, had never seen before. No beautiful woman whom he had loved in the days of his youth had ever looked at him like that; not even in the eyes of his own children, or of his wife, had he seen such affection. "You are my God, the ruler I have chosen of my own free will." This was what the eyes said. "You may scorn me, or beat me, if you will, but I shall still remain faithful."

From this on Berg gave more heed to the boy and saw that he was brave in action but shy in speech. Death seemed to have no terrors for him. He would deliberately choose for his path the fresh-formed ice on the mountain pools, the treacherous surface of the morass in springtime. He seemed to delight in danger. It gave him some compensation for the wild ocean storms he could no longer go out to meet. He would tremble in the night darkness of the wood, however, and even by day the gloom of a thicket or a deeper shadow could frighten him. When Berg asked him about this he was silent in embarrassment.

Tord did not sleep in the bed by the hearth at the back of the cave, but every night, when Berg was asleep the boy would creep to the entrance and lie there on one of the broad stones. Berg discovered this, and although he guessed the reason he asked the boy about it. Tord would not answer. To avoid further questions he slept in the bed for two nights, then returned to his post at the door.

One night, when a snow-storm raged in the tree-tops, piling up drifts even in the heart of the thickets, the flakes swirled into the cave of the outlaws. Tord, lying by the entrance, awoke in the morning to find himself wrapped in a blanket of melting snow. A day or two later he fell ill. Sharp pains pierced his lungs when he tried to draw breath. He endured the pain as long as his strength would stand it, but one evening, when he stooped to blow up the fire, he fell down and could not rise again. Berg came to his side and told him to lie in the warm bed. Tord groaned in agony, but could not move. Berg put his arm under the boy's body and carried him to the bed. He had a feeling while doing it as if he were touching a clammy snake; he had a taste in his mouth as if he had eaten unclean horseflesh, so repulsive was it to him to touch the person of this common thief. Berg covered the sick boy with his own warm bear-skin rug and gave him water. This was all he could do, but the illness was not dangerous, and Tord recovered quickly. But now that Berg had to do his companion's work for a few days, and had had to care for him, they seemed to have come nearer to one another. Tord dared to speak to Berg sometimes, as they sat together by the fire cutting their arrows.

"You come of good people, Berg," Tord said one evening. "Your relatives are the richest peasants in the valley. The men of your name have served kings and fought in their castles."

"They have more often fought with the rebels and done damage to the king's property," answered Berg.

"Your forefathers held great banquets at Christmas time. And you held banquets, too, when you were at home in your house. Hundreds of men and women could find places on the benches

in your great hall, the hall that was built in the days before St. Olaf came here to Viken for christening. Great silver urns were there, and mighty horns, filled with mead, went the rounds of your table."

Berg looked at the boy again. He sat on the edge of the bed with his head in his hands, pushing back the heavy tangled hair that hung over his eyes. His face had become pale and refined through his illness. His eyes still sparkled with fever. He smiled to himself at the pictures called up by his fancy—pictures of the great hall and of the silver urns, of the richly clad guests, and of Berg, the Giant, lording it in the place of honor. The peasant knew that even in the days of his glory no one had ever looked at him with eyes so shining in admiration, so glowing in reverence, as this boy did now, as he sat by the fire in his worn leather jacket. He was touched, and yet displeased. This common thief had no right to admire him.

"Were there no banquets in your home?" he asked.

Tord laughed: "Out there on the rocks where father and mother live? Father plunders the wrecks and mother is a witch. When the weather is stormy she rides out to meet the ships on a seal's back, and those who are washed overboard from the wrecks belong to her."

"What does she do with them?" asked Berg.

"Oh, a witch always needs corpses. She makes salves of them, or perhaps she eats them. On moonlit nights she sits out in the wildest surf and looks for the eyes and fingers of drowned children."

"That is horrible!" said Berg.

The boy answered with calm confidence: "It would be for others, but not for a witch. She can't help it."

This was an altogether new manner of looking at life for Berg. "Then thieves have to steal, as witches have to make magic?" he questioned sharply.

"Why, yes," answered the boy. "Every one has to do the thing he was born for." But a smile of sly cunning curled his lips, as he added: "There are thieves who have never stolen."

"What do you mean by that?" spoke Berg.

The boy still smiled his mysterious smile and seemed happy to have given his companion a riddle. "There are birds that do not fly; and there are thieves who have not stolen," he said.

Berg feigned stupidity, in order to trick the other's meaning: "How can any one be called a thief who has never stolen?" he said.

The boy's lips closed tight as if to hold back the words. "But if one has a father who steals—" he threw out after a short pause.

"A man may inherit house and money, but the name thief is given only to him who earns it."

Tord laughed gently. "But when one has a mother—and that mother comes and cries, and begs one to take upon one's self the father's crime—then one can laugh at the hangman and run away into the woods. A man may be outlawed for the sake of a fish net he has never seen."

Berg beat his fist upon the stone table, in great anger. Here this strong, beautiful boy had thrown away his whole life for another. Neither love, nor riches, nor the respect of his fellow

men could ever be his again. The sordid care for food and clothing was all that remained to him in life. And this fool had let him, Berg, despise an innocent man. He scolded sternly, but Tord was not frightened any more than a sick child is frightened at the scolding of his anxious mother.

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High up on one of the broad wooded hills there lay a black swampy lake. It was square in shape, and its banks were as straight, and their corners as sharp as if it had been the work of human hands. On three sides steep walls of rock rose up, with hardy mountain pines clinging to the stones, their roots as thick as a man's arm. At the surface of the lake, where the few strips of grass had been washed away, these naked roots twisted and coiled, rising out of the water like myriad snakes that had tried to escape from the waves, but had been turned to stone in their struggle. Or was it more like a mass of blackened skeletons of long-drowned giants which the lake was trying to throw off? The arms and legs were twisted in wild contortions, the long fingers grasped deep into the rocks, the mighty ribs formed arches that upheld ancient trees. But now and again these iron-hard arms, these steel fingers with which the climbing pines supported themselves, would loosen their hold, and then the strong north wind would hurl the tree from the ridge far out into the swamp. There it would lie, its crown burrowing deep in the muddy water. The fishes found good hiding places amid its twigs, while the roots rose up over the water like the arms of some hideous monster, giving the little lake a repulsive appearance.

The mountains sloped down on the fourth side of the little lake. A tiny rivulet foamed out here; but before the stream could find its path it twisted and turned among boulders and mounds of earth, forming a whole colony of islands, some of which scarce offered foothold, while others carried as many as twenty trees on their back.

Here, where the rocks were not high enough to shut out the sun, the lighter foliaged trees could grow. Here were the timid, gray-green alders, and the willows with their smooth leaves. Birches were here, as they always are wherever there is a chance to shut out the evergreens, and there were mountain ash and elder bushes, giving charm and fragrance to the place.

At the entrance to the lake there was a forest of rushes as high as a man's head, through which the sunlight fell as green upon the water as it falls on the moss in the true forest. There were little clearings among the reeds, little round ponds where the water lilies slumbered. The tall rushes looked down with gentle gravity upon these sensitive beauties, who closed their white leaves and their yellow hearts so quickly in their leather outer dress as soon as the sun withdrew his rays.

One sunny day the outlaws came to one of these little ponds to fish. They waded through the reeds to two high stones, and sat there throwing out their bait for the big, green, gleaming pike that slumbered just below the surface of the water. These men, whose life was now passed entirely among the mountains and the woods, had come to be as completely under the control of the powers of nature as were the plants or the animals. When the sun shone

they were open-hearted and merry, at evening they became silent, and the night, which seemed to them so all-powerful, robbed them of their strength. And now the green light that fell through the reeds and drew out from the water stripes of gold, brown, and black-green, soothed them into a sort of magic mood. They were completely shut out from the outer world. The reeds swayed gently in the soft wind, the rushes murmured, and the long, ribbon-like leaves struck them lightly in the face. They sat on the gray stones in their gray leather garments, and the shaded tones of the leather melted into the shades of the stones. Each saw his comrade sitting opposite him as quietly as a stone statue. And among the reeds they saw giant fish swimming, gleaming and glittering in all colours of the rainbow. When the men threw out their lines and watched the rings on the water widen amid the reeds, it seemed to them that the motion grew and grew until they saw it was not they themselves alone that had occasioned it. A Nixie, half human, half fish, lay sleeping deep down in the water. She lay on her back, and the waves clung so closely to her body that the men had not seen her before. It was her breath that stirred the surface. But it did not seem to the watchers that there was anything strange in the fact that she lay there. And when she had disappeared in the next moment they did not know whether her appearance had been an illusion or not.

The green light pierced through their eyes into their brains like a mild intoxication. They saw visions among the reeds, visions which they would not tell even to each other. There was not much fishing done. The day was given up to dreams and visions.

A sound of oars came from among the reeds, and they started up out of their dreaming. In a few moments a heavy boat, hewn out of a tree trunk, came into sight, set in motion by oars not much broader than walking sticks. The oars were in the hands of a young girl who had been gathering water-lilies. She had long, dark-brown braids of hair, and great dark eyes, but she was strangely pale, a pallour that was not gray, but softly pink tinted. Her cheeks were no deeper in colour than the rest of her face; her lips were scarce redder. She wore a bodice of white linen and a leather belt with a golden clasp. Her skirt was of blue with a broad red hem. She rowed past close by the outlaws without seeing them. They sat absolutely quiet, less from fear of discovery than from the desire to look at her undisturbed. When she had gone, the stone statues became men again and smiled:

"She was as white as the water-lilies," said one. "And her eyes were as dark as the water back there under the roots of the pines."

They were both so merry that they felt like laughing, like really laughing as they had never laughed in this swamp before, a laugh that would echo back from the wall of rock and loosen the roots of the pines.

"Did you think her beautiful?" asked the Giant.

"I do not know, she passed so quickly. Perhaps she was beautiful."

"You probably did not dare to look at her. Did you think she was the Nixie?"

And again they felt a strange desire to laugh.

. . . . . .

While a child, Tord had once seen a drowned man. He had found the corpse on the beach in broad daylight, and it had not frightened him, but at night his dreams were terrifying. He had seemed to be looking out over an ocean, every wave of which threw a dead body at his feet. He saw all the rocks and islands covered with corpses of the drowned, the drowned that were dead and belonged to the sea, but that could move, and speak, and threaten him with their white, stiffened fingers.

And so it was again. The girl whom he had seen in the reeds appeared to him in his dreams. He met her again down at the bottom of the swamp lake, where the light was greener even than in the reeds, and there he had time enough to see that she was beautiful. He dreamed that he sat on one of the great pine roots in the midst of the lake while the tree rocked up and down, now under, now over the surface of the water. Then he saw her on one of the smallest islands. She stood under the red mountain ash and laughed at him. In his very last dream it had gone so far that she had kissed him. But then it was morning, and he heard Berg rising, but he kept his eyes stubbornly closed that he might continue to dream. When he did awake he was dazed and giddy from what he had seen during the night. He thought much more about the girl than he had done the day before. Toward evening it occurred to him to ask Berg if he knew her name.

Berg looked at him sharply. "It is better for you to know it at once," he said. "It was Unn. We are related to each other."

And then Tord knew that it was this pale maiden who was the cause of Berg's wild hunted life in forest and mountain. He tried to search his memory for what he had heard about her.

Unn was the daughter of a free peasant. Her mother was dead, and she ruled in her father's household. This was to her taste, for she was independent by nature, and had no inclination to give herself to any husband. Unn and Berg were cousins, and the rumour had long gone about that Berg liked better to sit with Unn and her maids than to work at home in his own house. One Christmas, when the great banquet was to be given in Berg's hall, his wife had invited a monk from Draksmark, who, she hoped, would show Berg how wrong it was that he should neglect her for another. Berg and others besides him hated this monk because of his appearance. He was very stout and absolutely white. The ring of hair around his bald head, the brows above his moist eyes, the colour of his skin, of his hands, and of his garments, were all white. Many found him very repulsive to look at.

But the monk was fearless, and as he believed that his words would have greater weight if many heard them, he rose at the table before all the guests, and said: "Men call the cuckoo the vilest of birds because he brings up his young in the nest of others. But here sits a man who takes no care for his house and his children, and who seeks his pleasure with a strange woman. Him I will call the vilest of men." Unn rose in her place. "Berg, this is said to you and me," she cried. "Never have

I been so shamed, but my father is not here to protect me." She turned to go, but Berg hurried after her. "Stay where you are," she said. "I do not wish to see you again." He stopped her in the corridor, and asked her what he should do that she might stay with him. Her eyes glowed as she answered that he himself should know best what he must do. Then Berg went into the hall again and slew the monk.

Berg and Tord thought on awhile with the same thoughts, then Berg said: "You should have seen her when the white monk fell. My wife drew the children about her and cursed Unn. She turned the faces of the children toward her, that they might always remember the woman for whose sake their father had become a murderer. But Unn stood there so quiet and so beautiful that the men who saw her trembled. She thanked me for the deed, and prayed me to flee to the woods at once. She told me never to become a robber, and to use my knife only in some cause equally just."

"Your deed had ennobled her," said Tord.

And again Berg found himself astonished at the same thing that had before now surprised him in the boy. Tord was a heathen, or worse than a heathen; he never condemned that which was wrong. He seemed to know no sense of responsibility. What had to come, came. He knew of God, of Christ, and the Saints, but he knew them only by name, as one knows the names of the gods of other nations. The ghosts of the Scheeren Islands were his gods. His mother, learned in magic, had taught him to believe in the spirits of the dead. And then it was that Berg undertook a task which was as foolish as if he had woven a rope for his own neck. He opened the eyes of this ignorant boy to the power of God, the Lord of all Justice, the avenger of wrong who condemned sinners to the pangs of hell everlasting. And he taught him to love Christ and His Mother, and all the saintly men and women who sit before the throne of God praying that His anger may be turned away from sinners. He taught him all that mankind has learned to do to soften the wrath of God. He told him of the long trains of pilgrims journeying to the holy places; he told him of those who scourged themselves in their remorse; and he told him of the pious monks who flee the joys of this world.

The longer he spoke the paler grew the boy and the keener his attention as his eyes widened at the visions. Berg would have stopped, but the torrent of his own thoughts carried him away. Night sank down upon them, the black forest night, where the scream of the owl shrills ghostly through the stillness. God came so near to them that the brightness of His throne dimmed the stars, and the angels of vengeance descended upon the mountain heights. And below them the flames of the underworld fluttered up to the outer curve of the earth and licked greedily at this last refuge of a race crushed by sin and woe.

. . . . . .

Autumn came, and with it came storm. Tord went out alone into the woods to tend the traps and snares, while Berg remained at home to mend his clothes. The boy's path led him up a wooded height along which the falling leaves danced in circles in the

gust. Again and again the feeling came to him that some one was walking behind him. He turned several times, then went on again when he had seen that it was only the wind and the leaves. He threatened the rustling circles with his fist, and kept on his way. But he had not silenced the sounds of his vision. At first it was the little dancing feet of elfin children; then it was the hissing of a great snake moving up behind him. Beside the snake there came a wolf, a tall, gray creature, waiting for the moment when the adder should strike at his feet to spring upon his back. Tord hastened his steps, but the visions hastened with him. When they seemed but two steps behind him, ready for the spring, he turned. There was nothing there, as he had known all the time. He sat down upon a stone to rest. The dried leaves played about his feet. The leaves of all the forest trees were there: the little yellow birch leaves, the red-tinged mountain ash leaves, the dried, black-brown foliage of the elm, the bright red aspen leaves, and the yellow-green fringes of the willows. Faded and crumpled, broken, and scarred, they were but little like the soft, tender shoots of green that had unrolled from the buds a few months ago.

"Ye are sinners," said the boy. "All of us are sinners. Nothing is pure in the eyes of God. Ye have already been shriveled up in the flame of His wrath."

Then he went on again, while the forest beneath him waved like a sea in storm, although it was still and calm on the path around him. But he heard something he had never heard before. The wood was full of voices. Now it was like a whispering, now a gentle plaint, now a loud threat, or a roaring curse. It laughed, and it moaned. It was as the voice of hundreds. This unknown something that threatened and excited, that whistled and hissed, a something that seemed to be, and yet was not, almost drove him mad. He shivered in deadly terror, as he had shivered before, the day that he lay on the floor of his cave, and heard his pursuers rage over him through the forest. He seemed to hear again the crashing of the branches, the heavy footsteps of the men, the clanking of their arms, and their wild, bloodthirsty shouts.

It was not alone the storm that roared about him. There was something else in it, something yet more terrible; there were voices he could not understand, sounds as of a strange speech. He had heard many a mightier storm than this roar through the rigging. But he had never heard the wind playing on a harp of so many strings. Every tree seemed to have its own voice, every ravine had another song, the loud echo from the rocky wall shouted back in its own voice. He knew all these tones, but there were other stranger noises with them. And it was these that awoke a storm of voices within his own brain.

He had always been afraid when alone in the darkness of the wood. He loved the open sea and the naked cliffs. Ghosts and spirits lurked here in the shadows of the trees.

Then suddenly he knew who was speaking to him in the storm. It was God, the Great Avenger, the Lord of all Justice. God pursued him because of his comrade. God demanded that he

should give up the murderer of the monk to vengeance.

Tord began to speak aloud amid the storm. He told God what he wanted to do, but that he could not do it. He had wanted to speak to the Giant and to beg him make his peace with God. But he could not find the words; embarrassment tied his tongue. "When I learned that the world is ruled by a God of Justice," he cried, "I knew that he was a lost man. I have wept through the night for my friend. I know that God will find him, no matter where he may hide. But I could not speak to him; I could not find the words because of my love for him. Do not ask that I shall speak to him. Do not ask that the ocean shall rise to the height of the mountains."

He was silent again, and the deep voice of the storm, which he knew for God's voice, was silent also. There was a sudden pause in the wind, a burst of sunshine, a sound as of oars, and the gentle rustling of stiff reeds. These soft tones brought up the memory of Unn.

Then the storm began again, and he heard steps behind him, and a breathless panting. He did not dare to turn this time, for he knew that it was the white monk. He came from the banquet in Berg's great hall, covered with blood, and with an open ax cut in his forehead. And he whispered: "Betray him. Give him up, that you may save his soul."

Tord began to run. All this terror grew and grew in him, and he tried to flee from it. But as he ran he heard behind him the deep, mighty voice, which he knew was the voice of God. It was God himself pursuing him, demanding that he should give up the murderer. Berg's crime seemed more horrible to him than ever it had seemed before. A weaponless man had been murdered, a servant of God cut down by the steel. And the murderer still dared to live. He dared to enjoy the light of the sun and the fruits of the earth. Tord halted, clinched his fists, and shrieked a threat. Then, like a madman, he ran from the forest, the realm of terror, down into the valley.

. . . . . .

When Tord entered the cave the outlaw sat upon the bench of stone, sewing. The fire gave but a pale light, and the work did not seem to progress satisfactorily. The boy's heart swelled in pity. This superb Giant seemed all at once so poor and so unhappy.

"What is the matter?" asked Berg. "Are you ill? Have you been afraid?"

Then for the first time Tord spoke of his fear. "It was so strange in the forest. I heard the voices of spirits and I saw ghosts. I saw white monks."

"Boy!"

"They sang to me all the way up the slope to the hilltop. I ran from them, but they ran after me, singing. Can I not lay the spirits? What have I to do with them? There are others to whom their appearance is more necessary."

"Are you crazy to-night, Tord?"

Tord spoke without knowing what words he was using. His shyness had left him all at once, speech seemed to flow from his lips. "They were white monks, as pale as corpses. And their clothes are spotted with blood. They draw their hoods down over their foreheads, but I can see the wound shining there. The great, yawning, red wound from the ax."

"Tord," said the giant, pale and deeply grave, "the Saints alone know

why you see wounds of ax thrusts. I slew the monk with a knife."

Tord stood before Berg trembling and wringing his hands. "They demand you of me. They would compel me to betray you."

"Who? The monks?"

"Yes, yes, the monks. They show me visions. They show me Unn. They show me the open, sunny ocean. They show me the camps of the fishermen, where there is dancing and merriment. I close my eyes, and yet I can see it all. 'Leave me,' I say to them. 'My friend has committed a murder, but he is not bad. Leave me alone, and I will talk to him, that he may repent and atone. He will see the wrong he has done, and he will make a pilgrimage to the Holy Grave.'"

"And what do the monks answer?" asked Berg. "They do not want to pardon me. They want to torture me and to burn me at the stake."

"'Shall I betray my best friend?' I ask them. 'He is all that I have in the world. He saved me from the bear when its claws were already at my throat. We have suffered hunger and cold together. He covered me with his own garments while I was ill. I have brought him wood and water, I have watched over his sleep and led his enemies off the trail. Why should they think me a man who betrays his friend? My friend will go to the priest himself, and will confess to him, and then together we will seek absolution.'"

Berg listened gravely, his keen eyes searching in Tord's face. "Go to the priest yourself, and tell him the truth. You must go back again among mankind."

"What does it help if I go alone? The spirits of the dead follow me because of your sin. Do you not see how I tremble before you? You have lifted your hand against God himself. What crime is like unto yours? Why did you tell me about the just God? It is you yourself who compel me to betray you. Spare me this sin. Go to the priest yourself." He sank down on his knees before Berg.

The murderer laid his hand on his head and looked at him. He measured his sin by the terror of his comrade, and it grew and grew to monstrous size. He saw himself in conflict with the Will that rules the world. Remorse entered his heart.

"Woe unto me that I did what I did," he said. "And is not this miserable life, this life we lead here in terror, and in deprivation, is it not atonement enough? Have I not lost home and fortune? Have I not lost friends, and all the joys that make the life of a man? What more?"

As he heard him speak thus, Tord sprang up in wild terror. "You can repent!" he cried. "My words move your heart? Oh, come with me, come at once. Come, let us go while yet there is time."

Berg the Giant sprang up also. "You —did it——?"

"Yes, yes, yes. I have betrayed you. But come quickly. Come now, now that you can repent. We must escape. We will escape."

The murderer stooped to the ground where the battle-ax of his fathers lay at his feet. "Son of a thief," he hissed. "I trusted you—I loved you."

But when Tord saw him stoop for the ax, he knew that it was his own life that was in peril now. He tore his own ax

from his girdle, and thrust at Berg before the latter could rise. The Giant fell headlong to the floor, the blood spurting out over the cave. Between the tangled masses of hair Tord saw the great, yawning, red wound of an ax thrust.

Then the peasants stormed into the cave. They praised his deed and told him that he should receive full pardon.

Tord looked down at his hands, as if he saw there the fetters that had drawn him on to kill the man he loved. Like the chains of the Fenrir wolf, they were woven out of empty air. They were woven out of the green light amid the reeds, out of the play of shadows in the woods, out of the song of the storm, out of the rustling of the leaves, out of the magic vision of dreams. And he said aloud: "God is great."

He crouched beside the body, spoke amid his tears to the dead, and begged him to awake. The villagers made a litter of their spears, on which to carry the body of the free peasant to his home. The dead man aroused awe in their souls, they softened their voices in his presence. When they raised him on to the bier, Tord stood up, shook the hair from his eyes, and spoke in a voice that trembled:

"Tell Unn, for whose sake Berg the Giant became a murderer, that Tord the fisherman whose father plunders wrecks, and whose mother is a witch—tell her that Tord slew Berg because Berg had taught him that justice is the cornerstone of the world."

A Love Adventure

Once in the autumn I happened to be in a very unpleasant and inconvenient position. In the town where I had just arrived and where I knew not a soul, I found myself without a farthing in my pocket and without a night's lodging.

Having sold during the first few days every part of my costume without which it was still possible to go about, I passed from the town into the quarter called "Yste," where were the steamship wharves—a quarter which during the navigation season fermented with boisterous, laborious life, but now was silent and deserted, for we were in the last days of October.

Dragging my feet along the moist sand, and obstinately scrutinizing it with the desire to discover in it any sort of fragment of food, I wandered alone among the deserted buildings and warehouses, and thought how good it would be to get a full meal.

In our present state of culture hunger of the mind is more quickly satisfied than hunger of the body. You wander about the streets, you are surrounded by buildings not bad-looking from the outside—and you may safely say it—not so badly furnished inside, and the sight of them may excite within you stimulating ideas about architecture, hygiene, and many other wise and high-flying subjects. You may meet warmly and neatly dressed folks—all very polite, and turning away from you tactfully, not wishing offensively to notice the lamentable fact of your existence. Well,

well, the mind of a hungry man is always better nourished and healthier than the mind of the well-fed man; and there you have a situation from which you may draw a very ingenious conclusion in favour of the ill fed.

The evening was approaching, the rain was falling, and the wind blew violently from the north. It whistled in the empty booths and shops, blew into the plastered windowpanes of the taverns, and whipped into foam the wavelets of the river which splashed noisily on the sandy shore, casting high their white crests, racing one after another into the dim distance, and leaping impetuously over one another's shoulders. It seemed as if the river felt the proximity of winter, and was running at random away from the fetters of ice which the north wind might well have flung upon her that very night. The sky was heavy and dark; down from it swept incessantly scarcely visible drops of rain, and the melancholy elegy in nature all around me was emphasized by a couple of battered and misshapen willow-trees and a boat, bottom upwards, that was fastened to their roots.

The overturned canoe with its battered keel and the miserable old trees rifled by the cold wind—everything around me was bankrupt, barren, and dead, and the sky flowed with undryable tears. . . . Everything around was waste and gloomy . . . it seemed as if everything were dead, leaving me alone among the living, and for me also a cold death waited.

I was then eighteen years old—a good time!

I walked and walked along the cold wet sand, making my chattering teeth warble in honour of cold and hunger, when suddenly, as I was carefully searching for something to eat behind one of the empty crates, I perceived behind it, crouching on the ground, a figure in woman's clothes dank with the rain and clinging fast to her stooping shoulders. Standing over her, I watched to see what she was doing. It appeared that she was digging a trench in the sand with her hands—digging away under one of the crates.

"Why are you doing that?" I asked, crouching down on my heels quite close to her.

She gave a little scream and was quickly on her legs again. Now that she stood there staring at me, with her wide-open grey eyes full of terror, I perceived that it was a girl of my own age, with a very pleasant face embellished unfortunately by three large blue marks. This spoilt her, although these blue marks had been distributed with a remarkable sense of proportion, one at a time, and all were of equal size—two under the eyes, and one a little bigger on the forehead just over the bridge of the nose. This symmetry was evidently the work of an artist well inured to the business of spoiling the human physiognomy.

The girl looked at me, and the terror in her eyes gradually died out. . . . She shook the sand from her hands, adjusted her cotton headgear, cowered down, and said:

"I suppose you too want something to eat? Dig away then! My hands are tired. Over there"—she nodded her head in the direction of a booth—"there is bread for certain . . . and sausages too. . . . That booth is still carrying on business."

I began to dig. She, after waiting a

little and looking at me, sat down beside me and began to help me.

We worked in silence. I cannot say now whether I thought at that moment of the criminal code, of morality, of proprietorship, and all the other things about which, in the opinion of many experienced persons, one ought to think every moment of one's life. Wishing to keep as close to the truth as possible, I must confess that apparently I was so deeply engaged in digging under the crate that I completely forgot about everything else except this one thing: What could be inside that crate?

The evening drew on. The grey, mouldy, cold fog grew thicker and thicker around us. The waves roared with a hollower sound than before, and the rain pattered down on the boards of that crate more loudly and more frequently. Somewhere or other the night-watchman began springing his rattle.

"Has it got a bottom or not?" softly inquired my assistant. I did not understand what she was talking about, and I kept silence.

"I say, has the crate got a bottom? If it has we shall try in vain to break into it. Here we are digging a trench, and we may, after all, come upon nothing but solid boards. How shall we take them off? Better smash the lock; it is a wretched lock."

Good ideas rarely visit the heads of women, but, as you see, they do visit them sometimes. I have always valued good ideas, and have always tried to utilize them as far as possible.

Having found the lock, I tugged at it and wrenched off the whole thing. My accomplice immediately stooped down and wriggled like a serpent into the gaping-open, four cornered cover of the crate whence she called to me approvingly, in a low tone:

"You're a brick!"

Nowadays a little crumb of praise from a woman is dearer to me than a whole dithyramb from a man, even though he be more eloquent than all the ancient and modern orators put together. Then, however, I was less amiably disposed than I am now, and, paying no attention to the compliment of my comrade, I asked her curtly and anxiously:

"Is there anything?"

In a monotonous tone she set about calculating our discoveries.

"A basketful of bottles—thick furs—a sun-shade—an iron pail."

All this was uneatable. I felt that my hopes had vanished. . . . But suddenly she exclaimed vivaciously:

"Aha! here it is!"

"What?"

"Bread . . . a loaf . . . it's only wet . . . take it!"

A loaf flew to my feet and after it herself, my valiant comrade. I had already bitten off a morsel, stuffed it in my mouth, and was chewing it. . . .

"Come, give me some too! . . . And we mustn't stay here. . . . Where shall we go?" she looked inquiringly about on all sides. . . . It was dark, wet, and boisterous.

"Look! there's an upset canoe yonder . . . let us go there."

"Let us go then!" And off we set, demolishing our booty as we went, and filling our mouths with large portions of it. . . . The rain grew more violent, the river roared; from somewhere or other resounded a prolonged mocking whistle—just as if Someone great who feared nobody was whistling down all earthly institutions and along with them

this horrid autumnal wind and us its heroes. This whistling made my heart throb painfully, in spite of which I greedily went on eating, and in this respect the girl, walking on my left hand, kept even pace with me.

"What do they call you?" I asked her —why I know not.

"Natasha," she answered shortly, munching loudly.

I stared at her. My heart ached within me; and then I stared into the mist before me, and it seemed to me as if the inimical countenance of my Destiny was smiling at me enigmatically and coldly.

. . . . . .

The rain scourged the timbers of the skiff incessantly, and its soft patter induced melancholy thoughts, and the wind whistled as it flew down into the boat's battered bottom through a rift, where some loose splinters of wood were rattling together—a disquieting and depressing sound. The waves of the river were splashing on the shore, and sounded so monotonous and hopeless, just as if they were telling something unbearably dull and heavy, which was boring them into utter disgust, something from which they wanted to run away and yet were obliged to talk about all the same. The sound of the rain blended with their splashing, and a long-drawn sigh seemed to be floating above the overturned skiff —the endless, labouring sigh of the earth, injured and exhausted by the eternal changes from the bright and warm summer to the cold misty and damp autumn. The wind blew continually over the desolate shore and the foaming river—blew and sang its melancholy songs. . . .

Our position beneath the shelter of the skiff was utterly devoid of comfort; it was narrow and damp, tiny cold drops of rain dribbled through the damaged bottom; gusts of wind penetrated it. We sat in silence and shivered with cold. I remembered that I wanted to go to sleep. Natasha leaned her back against the hull of the boat and curled herself up into a tiny ball. Embracing her knees with her hands, and resting her chin upon them, she stared doggedly at the river with wide-open eyes; on the pale patch of her face they seemed immense, because of the blue marks below them. She never moved, and this immobility and silence—I felt it—gradually produced within me a terror of my neighbour. I wanted to talk to her, but I knew not how to begin.

It was she herself who spoke.

"What a cursed thing life is!" she exclaimed plainly, abstractedly, and in a tone of deep conviction.

But this was no complaint. In these words there was too much of indifference for a complaint. This simple soul thought according to her understanding —thought and proceeded to form a certain conclusion which she expressed aloud, and which I could not confute for fear of contradicting myself. Therefore I was silent, and she, as if she had not noticed me, continued to sit there immovable.

"Even if we croaked . . . what then . . ." Natasha began again, this time quietly and reflectively, and still there was not one note of complaint in her words. It was plain that this person, in the course of her reflections on life, was regarding her own case, and had arrived at the conviction that in order to preserve herself from the mockeries of life, she was not in a posi-

tion to do anything else but simply "croak"—to use her own expression.

The clearness of this line of thought was inexpressibly sad and painful to me, and I felt that if I kept silence any longer I was really bound to weep. . . . And it would have been shameful to have done this before a woman, especially as she was not weeping herself. I resolved to speak to her.

"Who was it that knocked you about?" I asked. For the moment I could not think of anything more sensible or more delicate.

"Pashka did it all," she answered in a dull and level tone.

"And who is he?"

"My lover. . . . He was a baker."

"Did he beat you often?"

"Whenever he was drunk he beat me. . . . Often!"

And suddenly, turning towards me, she began to talk about herself, Pashka, and their mutual relations. He was a baker with red moustaches and played very well on the banjo. He came to see her and greatly pleased her, for he was a merry chap and wore nice clean clothes. He had a vest which cost fifteen rubles and boots with dress tops. For these reasons she had fallen in love with him, and he became her "creditor." And when he became her creditor he made it his business to take away from her the money which her other friends gave to her for bonbons, and, getting drunk on this money, he would fall to beating her; but that would have been nothing if he hadn't also begun to "run after" other girls before her very eyes.

"Now, wasn't that an insult? I am not worse than the others. Of course that meant that he was laughing at me, the blackguard. The day before yesterday I asked leave of my mistress to go out for a bit, went to him, and there I found Dimka sitting beside him drunk. And he, too, was half seas over. I said, 'You scoundrel, you!' And he gave me a thorough hiding. He kicked me and dragged me by the hair. But that was nothing to what came after. He spoiled everything I had on—left me just as I am now! How could I appear before my mistress? He spoiled everything . . . my dress and my jacket, too—it was quite a new one; I gave a fiver for it . . . and tore my kerchief from my head. . . . Oh, Lord! What will become of me now?" she suddenly whined in a lamentable overstrained voice.

The wind howled, and became ever colder and more boisterous. . . . Again my teeth began to dance up and down, and she, huddled up to avoid the cold, pressed as closely to me as she could, so that I could see the gleam of her eyes through the darkness.

"What wretches all you men are! I'd burn you all in an oven; I'd cut you in pieces. If any one of you was dying I'd spit in his mouth, and not pity him a bit. Mean skunks! You wheedle and wheedle, you wag your tails like cringing dogs, and we fools give ourselves up to you, and it's all up with us! Immediately you trample us underfoot. . . . Miserable loafers!"

She cursed us up and down, but there was no vigour, no malice, no hatred of these "miserable loafers" in her cursing that I could hear. The tone of her language by no means corresponded with its subject-matter, for it was calm enough, and the gamut of her voice was terribly poor.

Yet all this made a stronger impression on me than the most eloquent and con-

vincing pessimistic books and speeches, of which I had read a good many and which I still read to this day. And this, you see, was because the agony of a dying person is much more natural and violent than the most minute and picturesque descriptions of death.

I felt really wretched—more from cold than from the words of my neighbour. I groaned softly and ground my teeth.

Almost at the same moment I felt two little arms about me—one of them touched my neck and the other lay upon my face—and at the same time an anxious, gentle, friendly voice uttered the question:

"What ails you?"

I was ready to believe that some one else was asking me this and not Natasha, who had just declared that all men were scoundrels, and expressed a wish for their destruction. But she it was, and now she began speaking quickly, hurriedly.

"What ails you, eh? Are you cold? Are you frozen? Ah, what a one you are, sitting there so silent like a little owl! Why, you should have told me long ago that you were cold. Come . . . lie on the ground . . . stretch yourself out and I will lie . . . there! How's that! Now put your arms round me! . . . tighter! How's that? You shall be warm very soon now. . . . And then we'll lie back to back. . . . The night will pass so quickly, see if it won't. I say . . . have you too been drinking? . . . Turned out of your place, eh? . . . It doesn't matter."

And she comforted me. . . . She encouraged me.

May I be thrice accursed! What a world of irony was in this single fact for me! Just imagine! Here was I seriously occupied at this very time with the destiny of humanity, thinking of the re-organization of the social system, of political revolutions, reading all sorts of devilishly-wise books whose abysmal profundity was certainly unfathomable by their very authors—at this very time, I say, I was trying with all my might to make of myself "a potent active social force." It even seemed to me that I had partially accomplished my object; anyhow, at this time, in my ideas about myself, I had got so far as to recognize that I had an exclusive right to exist, that I had the necessary greatness to deserve to live my life, and that I was fully competent to play a great historical part therein. And a woman was now warming me with her body, a wretched, battered, hunted creature, who had no place and no value in life, and whom I had never thought of helping till she helped me herself, and whom I really would not have known how to help in any way even if the thought of it had occurred to me.

Ah! I was ready to think that all this was happening to me in a dream—in a disagreeable, an oppressive dream.

But, ugh! it was impossible for me to think that, for cold drops of rain were dripping down upon me, the woman was pressing close to me, her warm breath was fanning my face, and—despite a slight odor of vodka—it did me good. The wind howled and raged, the rain smote upon the skiff, the waves splashed, and both of us, embracing each other convulsively, nevertheless shivered with cold. All this was only too real, and I am certain that nobody ever dreamed such an oppressive and horrid dream as that reality.

But Natasha was talking all the time of something or other, talking kindly and sympathetically, as only women can talk. Beneath the influence of her voice and kindly words a little fire began to burn up within me, and something inside my heart thawed in consequence.

Then tears poured from my eyes like a hailstorm, washing away from my heart much that was evil, much that was stupid, much sorrow and dirt, which had fastened upon it before that night. Natasha comforted me.

"Come, come, that will do, little one! Don't take on! That'll do! God will give you another chance . . . you will right yourself and stand in your proper place again . . . and it will be all right. . . ."

And she kept kissing me . . . many kisses did she give me . . . burning kisses . . . and all for nothing. . . .

Those were the first kisses from a woman that had ever been bestowed upon me, and they were the best kisses too, for all the subsequent kisses cost me frightfully dear, and really gave me nothing at all in exchange.

"Come, don't take on so, funny one! I'll manage for you to-morrow if you cannot find a place." Her quiet persuasive whispering sounded in my ears as if it came through a dream.

There we lay till dawn. . . .

And when the dawn came, we crept from behind the skiff and went into the town. . . . Then we took friendly leave of each other and never met again, although for half a year I searched in every hole and corner for that kind Natasha, with whom I spent the autumn night just described.

If she is already dead—and well for her if it were so—may she rest in peace! And if she be alive . . . still I say "Peace to her soul!" And may the consciousness of her fall never enter her soul . . . for that would be a superfluous and fruitless suffering if life is to be lived. . . .

The Venus-Berg

About four centuries had elapsed since the death of the Faithful Eckart, the famous knight, when there lived a certain lord, who stood in high reputation as a counsellor at the imperial court. The same lord had a son, one of the handsomest in all the land, highly esteemed and beloved by his friends and countrymen. Suddenly, however, he disappeared under very peculiar circumstances, which occurred previous to his departure, and no one could gather any tidings of him whatsoever. But, from the time of the Faithful Eckart, a tradition respecting the Venus-berg had become very prevalent among the people, and it was asserted by many that he must have wandered thither, and there been devoted to eternal destruction on the mountain.

Among the whole of his friends and relatives who lamented the young knight's loss none grieved so much as Frederick of Wolfsburg. They had been early companions, and their attachment had grown with their years, insomuch that their subsequent attachment appeared rather the result of necessity

than of choice. Frederick had married and had already a playful young circle round him. Years passed away, and still no tidings arrived as to the fate of his friend, whom he was at length reluctantly compelled to number with the dead.

One evening, as he was standing under the tower of his castle, he observed a pilgrim approaching at some distance in the direction of the castle gates. The stranger was very singularly dressed; his whole appearance, and particularly his gait, striking the young knight as something odd and unaccountable. As the pilgrim drew nigh, he went to meet him, and, on examining his features, thought he could recognize them. He looked again, and the whole truth burst upon him: it was indeed no other than his long-lost friend—the young Lord of the Fir Woods himself! Yet he shuddered and uttered an exclamation of surprise when he contemplated the ravages which time had made in the noblest face and form—the theme of his former admirers—of which only the ruins were to be traced; no, he no longer appeared the same being.

The two friends embraced, while they still gazed at each other as upon perfect strangers newly introduced to each other. Many were the confused questions and answers which passed between them, and Frederick often trembled at the strange wild glances of his friend: the fire seemed to sparkle in his eyes. He agreed, however, to sojourn with him; but when he had remained a few days, he informed Frederick that he was about to go upon a pilgrimage as far as Rome.

Their acquaintance in a short time grew more familiar, and resumed its former happy and confidential tone. They recalled the mutual adventures and plans of their early years, though the Lord of the Woods seemed to avoid touching upon any incident which had occurred since his late disappearance from home. This only raised Frederick's curiosity the more; he entreated to be informed, and still with more earnestness as he found their former regard and confidence increase. Still the stranger long sought, by the most friendly appeals and warnings, to be excused; till at last, upon fresh solicitation, he said, "Now, then, be it so! your wish shall be fully gratified; only never in future reproach me, should my history excite feelings—lasting feelings—of sorrow and dismay."

Frederick took him in the most friendly manner by the arm, and led him into the open air. They turned into a pleasant grove, and seated themselves on a mossy bank; the stranger then giving his hand to his friend, turned away his head among the soft leaves and grass, and, amidst many bitter sighs and sobs, gave way to the sad emotions which the recollection seemed to inspire. His friend, pressing his hand, tried every means to console him; upon which the stranger, again raising his head, began his story in a calmer voice, to the following purport:

"Believe me, my best friend, that there are many of us who, from the day of their birth, are made and born subject to an evil spirit, which dogs their steps through life, and ceases not to torment them until it succeeds in bringing them within the sphere of its predestined destruction. Thus it has happened unto me, and my whole life is only one enduring penalty of my birth—the labour-

pains unintermittingly inflicted; and when I awake I must awake in hell. Therefore have I already made so many painful steps, and as many yet remain of this my woeful pilgrimage, should I indeed be able to reach the feet and obtain absolution of the holy father at Rome. Yes, at his feet must I lay the heavy burden of my sins, or lie groaning under the weight of them, and die in despair."

Here Frederick renewed his consolatory advice; but the lost knight, appearing to pay no attention to it, in a short time proceeded in his narrative as follows:

"There goes an ancient tradition that several hundred years ago there lived a knight known by the name of the Faithful Eckart. It is further believed that there appeared a strange musician, at that time, from one of the wonderful mountains, whose unearthly music awakened such strange delight and wild wishes in the hearts of his audience that they would irresistibly follow him, and lose themselves in the labyrinths of the same mountain. At that period hell is supposed to have kept its portals open there, in order to entrap, by such sweet irresistible airs, unhappy mortals into its abyss. Often have I heard the same account when I was a boy, and sometimes it used to make me shudder. In a short time it seemed as if all nature, every tone, and every flower reminded me, in spite of myself, of that same old fearful saying. Oh, it is impossible for me to convey to you what kind of mournful thought, what strange ineffable longing, one time suddenly seized me, bound me, and led me, as it were, in chains; and particularly when I gazed upon the floating clouds, and the streaks of light ethereal blue seen between them; and what strange recollections the woods and meadows conjured up in my soul. Often did I feel all the love and tenderness of nature in my inmost spirit; often stretched forth my arms, and longed for wings to fly into the embrace of something yet more beautiful; to pour myself, like the spirit of nature, over vale and mountain; to become all-present with the grass, the flowers, the trees, and to breathe in the fulness of the mighty sea. When some lovely prospects had delighted me during the day, I was sure to be haunted with dark and threatening images that same night, all of which seemed busy in closing against me the gates of life. One dream, in particular, made an indelible impression upon my mind, although I was unable to recall its individual features clearly to my memory.

"I thought I could see an immense concourse of people in the streets,—I heard unintelligible words and languages, and I turned away, and went in the dark night to the house of my parents, where I found only my father, who was unwell. The next morning I threw my arms round both my parents' necks, embracing them tenderly, as if I felt that some evil power were about to separate us for ever. 'Oh, were I to lose you,' I said to my dear father; 'how very lonely and unhappy should I feel in this world without you!' They kissed and consoled me tenderly; but they could not succeed in dispelling that dark foreboding image from my imagination.

"As I grew older, I did not mingle with other children of my own age in their sports. I wandered lonely through the fields, and on one occasion it happened that I missed my way, and got

into a gloomy wood, where I wandered about calling for help. After searching my way back for some time in vain, I all at once found myself standing before a lattice which opened into a garden. Here I remarked pleasant shady walks, fruit-trees and flowers, among which were numbers of roses which shone lovely in the sunbeams. An uncontrollable wish to approach them more nearly seized me, and I eagerly forced my way through the latticework, and found myself in that beautiful garden. I bent down and embraced the plants and flowers, kissed the roses over and over, and shed tears. While lost in this strange feeling, half sorrow, half delight, two young maidens came towards me along the walk, one older, and the other about my own years. I was roused from my trance, only to yield myself up to fresh amazement. My eye reeled upon the younger, and at that moment I felt as if I had been suddenly restored to happiness after all my sufferings. They invited me into the house; the parents of the young people inquired my name, and were kind enough to send my father word that I was safe with them; and in the evening he himself came to bring me home.

"From this day forth the uncertain and idle tenour of my life acquired some fixed aim; my ideas recurred incessantly to the lovely maidens and the garden; thither daily flew my hopes and all my wishes. I abandoned my playmates and all my usual pastimes, and could not resist again visiting the garden, the castle, and its lovely young inmates. Soon I appeared to become domesticated, and my absence no longer created surprise, while my favourite Emma became hourly more dear to me. My affection continued to increase in warmth and tenderness, though I was myself unconscious of it. I was now happy! I had not a wish to gratify, beyond that of returning, and looking forward again to the hour of meeting.

"About this time a young knight was introduced to the family; he was acquainted likewise with my parents, and he appeared to attach himself in the same manner as I had done to the fair young Emma. From the moment I observed this I began to hate him as my deadliest enemy; but my feelings were indescribably more bitter when I fancied I saw that Emma preferred his society to mine. I felt as if, from that instant, the music which had hitherto accompanied me suddenly died away in my breast. My thoughts dwelt incessantly upon hatred and death; strange feelings burned within my breast, in particular whenever I heard Emma sing the well-known song to the lute. I did not even attempt to disguise my enmity, and when my parents reproached me for my conduct, I turned away from them with an obstinate and wilful air. I wandered for hours together in the woods and among the rocks, indulging evil thoughts, chiefly directed against myself. I had already determined upon my rival's death.

"In the course of a few months the young knight declared his wishes to Emma's parents, and they were received with pleasure. All that was most sweet and wonderful in nature, all that had ever influenced and delighted me, seemed to have united in my idea of Emma. I knew, I acknowledged, and I wished for no other happiness—nothing more—nothing but her. I had even wilfully predetermined that the loss of

her, and my own destruction, should take place on one and the same day: neither should survive the other a moment.

"My parents were much grieved at witnessing my wildness and rudeness of manner; my mother became ill, but it touched me not; I inquired but little after her, and saw her only very seldom. The nuptial day of my rival was drawing nigh, and my agony proportionably increased: it hurried me through the woods and across the mountains, as if pursued by a grisly phantom by day and by night. I called down the most frightful maledictions both upon Emma and myself. I had not a single friend to advise with—no one wished to receive me, for all seemed to have given me over for lost. Yes! for the detested fearful eve of the bridal day was at hand. I had taken refuge among the rocks and cliffs; I was listening to the roaring cataract; I looked into the foaming waters, and started back in horror at myself. On the approach of morning, I saw my abhorred rival descending the hill at a little distance: I drew nigh —provoked him with bitter and jeering words, and when he drew his sword, I flew upon him like lightning, beat down his guard with my hanger, and—he bit the dust.

"I hastened from the spot—I never once looked back at him; but his guide bore the body away. The same night I haunted the neighbourhood of the castle where dwelt my Emma now. A few days afterwards, in passing the convent near at hand, I heard the bells tolling, nuns singing funeral hymns, and saw death-lights burning in the sanctuary. I inquired into the cause, and was informed that the young Lady Emma had died of the shock on hearing that her lover had been killed.

"I was in doubt what to think and where to remain; I doubted whether I existed—whether all were true. I determined to see my parents, and the night after reached the place where they lived. I found everything in commotion: the street was filled with horses and carriages; pages and soldiers were all mingled together, and spoke in strange broken words:—it was just as if the emperor were on the eve of undertaking a campaign against his enemies. A single light was dimly burning in my father's house; I felt a strange sensation, like strangulation, within my breast. When I knocked, my father himself came to the door, with slow soft steps, and just then I recollected a strange dream I had in my childhood, and felt, with horrible truth, that it was the same scene which I was then going through. Quite dismayed, I inquired, 'Why are you up so late to-night, father?' He led me in, saying as he entered, 'I may well be up and watching, when your mother has only this moment expired.'

"These words shot like lightning through my soul. My father sat himself thoughtfully down; I seated myself at his side: the corpse lay upon a bed, and was appallingly covered over with white fillets and napkins. My heart struggled, but could not burst. 'I myself keep watch,' said the old man, 'for my poor wife always sits near me.' My senses here failed me. I raised my eyes towards one corner, and there I saw something rising up like a mist; it turned and motioned, and soon took the well-known lineaments of my mother, who seemed to regard me with a fixed and serious air. I attempted to escape,

but I could not, for the figure motioned to him, and my father held me fast in his arms, while he softly whispered to me, 'She died of grief, my son, for you.' I embraced him with the most terrific, soul-cutting emotion. I clung to him for protection like a feeble child; burning tears ran down my breast, but I uttered no sound. My father kissed me, and I shuddered as I felt his lips, for they were deadly cold—cold as if I had been kissed by the dead. 'How is it with you, dear father?' I murmured, in trembling agony; but he seemed to sink and gather into himself, as it were, and replied not a word. I felt him in my arms growing colder and colder. I felt at his heart, but it was quite still; yet, in the bitter agony of my woe, I held the body fast clasped in my embrace.

"By a sudden glimmer, like the first break of morning, which shot through the gloomy chamber, I there saw my father's spirit close to that of my mother; and both gazed upon me with a compassionate expression, as I stood with the dear deceased in my arms. From that moment I saw and heard no more. I lay deprived of consciousness, and I was found by the servants delirious, and yet powerless as a babe, on the ensuing morning."

The Lord of the Forest had proceeded thus far with his narrative, to which his friend Frederick had listened in the utmost alarm and astonishment, when he suddenly broke off, overpowered by the intensity of his feelings. His friend was silent and thoughtful; then taking the unhappy man by the arm, he led him back into the castle, and they went into a room, and seated themselves alone. After remaining some time silent, the wretched pilgrim resumed his tale.

"The memory of that hour is still as fearfully impressed upon my mind, and I am at a loss to conjecture how I was so unfortunate as to survive it. For it was now, indeed, that this once fair earth, with life, and all that life had to afford, became worse than dead and perished for me—became a lone waste and wilderness, with all its soft airs, sweet flowers, pure streams, and blue starry skies. I stood like one, the last of a sudden overwhelming wreck, saved only to regret that he had not perished with all that was dearest to him on earth. How I lived on from day to day I know not; till at last, unable longer to contend with the fiends that grappled me, I flew to society for relief. I joined a number of dissipated characters, who sought, like me, to lose the sense of their follies and enormities in the most dissolute pleasures. Yes, I sought to propitiate the evil spirit within me by obedience to its worst dictates. My former wildness and impatience revived, and I no longer placed any restraint over my wishes.

"I fell into the hands of an abandoned wretch of the name of Rudolf, who only laughed at my lamentations and remorse. More than a year thus elapsed; my anxiety and horror, in spite of all efforts to control them, daily gained ground upon me, until I was seized with utter despair. Like all who experience that stage of such a malady, I took to wandering without any object. I arrived at distant and unknown places—spots unvisited by other feet; and often I could have thrown myself from some airy height into the green sunny meads and vales below, or rushed into the cool

streams to quench my soul's fiery and insatiable thirst; yet though I had no fear, something unaccountable always restrained me. I made many attempts towards the close of the day, for I longed to be annihilated; but when the morning returned with its golden beams, its fresh dews, and odorous flowers, I felt I could destroy nothing, and hope and love of life revived within my breast. A thought then came across me, that all hell was conspired together to work my utter perdition, that both my pleasures and my pains arose from the same fiendish source, and that a malicious spirit was gradually directing all the powers and influences of my mind to that sole end. I yielded myself up to it, in order to mitigate the various pains and agonies inflicted by it. On one dark and stormy night I went into the mountains. I mounted one of their highest and giddiest peaks, where foot of man never before trod, and there, with my whole strength of heart and soul, I invoked the foe of God and man to appear. I called him in language that I felt he must obey. My words were powerful: the fiend stood at my side, and I felt no alarm. While conversing with him, I could feel my faith in each haunted and wonder-working mountain growing stronger within me, and the Base One taught me a song sufficiently potent of itself to guide me the right path into its labyrinths. He vanished; and then, for the first time since the day of my birth, I found myself alone; and now for the first time I comprehended the nature of my wandering thoughts, which, from this middle point of life, had been the whole time in pursuit of a new spiritual world. I set forward on my way, and the song which I sang with a loud fearless voice conducted me easily over the most strange desert places, such as those possessed with demons only know how to find; all else, both within and without me, beside the loud clear song, was buried in oblivion; it bore me, as if on lofty wings, back to my native spot; though I tried to avoid their shadow, which seemed to frown in the strong moonshine, and the wild tones, which in their softest dying fall appeared to upbraid me. It was thus I approached the strange mountain: the night was dark and tempestuous; the moon glimmered through a mass of dusky livid clouds; yet boldly and loudly did I sing that song. A giant form arose, and motioned me with its sceptre back. I drew nigher. 'I am the Faithful Eckart,' exclaimed the supernatural form; 'and, praise to the goodness of the blessed God, I am permitted to hold watch here, to deter the unhappy from rushing into the base fiend's power.' I rushed on. On passing, I found my way led through subterraneous passages in the mountain. The path was so narrow as to compel me to force my way: I heard the gushing of the hidden waters, and the noise of spirits engaged in forging steel, gold, and silver in their caverns, for the temptation and perdition of man. I heard too the deep clanging tones and notes in their simple and secret powers, which supply all our earthly music; and the lower I descended, the more it seemed to fall like a veil from before my eyes.

"I pushed more impatiently forward, and beheld other human forms hovering around, among whom I recognized my friend Rudolf. I was at a loss to conceive how they could thus slip past me in that narrow way; but they seemed

to glide through the crevices of the stones and rocks, without being at all aware of me.

"Soon I heard other music, of quite an opposite character to the last, and my spirit within me struggled, as if eager to fly nearer and catch the notes. I came into more open space, and on all sides strange clear glowing colours burst upon my eye. This I felt was what I had all along sighed for; deep in my heart I welcomed the presence of something I had long looked for—the deep-seated master-passion, of which I then felt the ravishing powers playing in their full strength within my breast. A swarm of the mad heathen deities, with the goddess Venus at their head, ran forward to greet me,—all demons that assumed those ancients' names, and were banished, thither by the Almighty, their career being fully run upon earth, though they still continue to work in secret.

"All the delights so familiar to the world I there found and enjoyed in their fullest and keenest zest. My appetite was as insatiable as the delight was lasting. The long-famed beauties of the ancient world were all there—all which my most ardent wishes required was mine, and each day that world grew brighter and appeared arrayed in more charming colours. Streams of the most costly wines slaked our thirst, the most lovely and delicious forms played and wantoned in the air, while a throng of naked Loves hovered invitingly around me, shed perfumes over my head, and tones of music burst forth from nature's inmost heart, and with their undulating freshness restored the ardour of our desires, while soft mists and dews stole over flowery fields, giving new essence to their ravishing odours.

"How many years thus passed I am quite unable to state; for here was no time and no divisions; the luscious charm of virgin beauty burned in the flowers, and in the forms of girls bloomed the fragrant charm of the flowers; their colours seemed to enjoy a peculiar language; tones uttered new words; the world of sense was enclosed, as it were, within the glowing bloom of those luxurious flowers—the resident spirits within were ever engaged in celebrating their triumphant delights.

"How this was accomplished I can neither explain nor comprehend; but soon, amid all my sinful and outrageous pleasures, I began to sigh for repose, for the innocent earth I had left, with all its virtuous social endearments; and my desire grew as violent as it had formerly been to leave it for what I had there obtained. I wished to lead the same life as other mortals, with its mixed pains and pleasures. I was satiated with splendour and excess, and turned with thoughts of pleasure towards my native land. Some unaccountable mercy of the Almighty granted me the privilege of returning. I found myself once more in this present world, and dream only of expiating and receiving absolution for my sins at the footstool of the all-restoring father in God at Rome, that so I may again be numbered in the rank of other living men."

Here the sad pilgrim became silent; and Frederick fixed his eye upon him, with a searching glance, for some time. At last he took his poor friend's hand, and said, "Although I have not yet recovered from my astonishment, and cannot in any way comprehend your nar-

rative, yet I conceive it impossible that all with which you have been thus fearfully haunted can be other than a strong delusion of the mind. For Emma herself is still alive, she is my own wife; we two have never differed, much less engaged with our weapons, during the whole course of our lives. No, we never hated each other, as you seem to think, though you were missing just before my marriage from home. Besides, you never at the time gave me a single hint that you loved my Emma. I never heard a word of it." Then he again took his poor bewildered friend by the hand, and led him into another apartment to his wife, who had just returned from a visit of some days to one of her sisters. The pilgrim stood dumb, and thoughtful in her presence, though he examined the form and features of the lady. Soon shaking his head repeatedly, he said, in a low voice, "By heavens! but this is one of the most wonderful adventures of all!"

Frederick now related to him everything which had occurred to himself since they parted, and attempted to explain how he must have been labouring under a temporary delirium during many years past.

"Oh! I know right well," answered the pilgrim, "how it is: I am still bewitched and insane; but hell will clear up these juggling tricks, unless I go speedily for Rome and lighten my conscience of its desperate sins."

Emma tried to withdraw his attention from the subject by recurring to scenes and incidents of his childhood; but the pilgrim was not to be undeceived. One day he suddenly leaped up, declaring he must instantly set out, and forth he went without even saying farewell.

Frederick and his Emma often discoursed of the strange unhappy pilgrim. A few months had scarcely elapsed, when, pale and worn, in tattered attire and barefoot, his poor friend entered Frederick's apartment while he was yet asleep. He pressed his lips to his, and exclaimed hastily, "The holy father will not forgive me. I must away and seek my former abode." He then ran hastily back.

Frederick imagined he had left the castle, and was going into his wife's chamber, where were her women, who were all running to find him in an agony of terror and alarm. The fearful dweller of the woods and mountains had been there: he had come early in the morning, and uttering the words, "This shall not stop me in my career!" he had dispatched her upon the spot.

Frederick was still unable to account for the strange feelings of dismay and uneasiness he felt. He could not rest, and ran into the open air, and when they wished to bring him back, he exclaimed bitterly, "that the pilgrim had kissed his lips, and that he was burning inwardly until he should meet with him again." He then ran rapidly in a variety of directions in search of the wonderful mountain, and he was never afterwards heard of. It was reported by the people that whoever received a kiss from one of the dwellers of that mountain was unable to resist the evil enchantment, which, with the same powers of sorcery, tempted him likewise into its subterraneous depths.

The Scorpion

Friar Gomez was a lay-brother. He had charge of the refectory of the infirmary attached to the Franciscan church in Lima. He performed miracles by the score, making as little fuss about them as though they were quite unimportant things.

For example, it chanced one day that as the friar was crossing a bridge, a runaway horse threw its rider. The poor fellow lay as though dead, his head bruised and blood pouring from his mouth and nose.

"He's dead! he's dead!" the bystanders cried. "Run to San Lorenzo for the holy oil!" Everywhere nothing but uproar and confusion.

But Friar Gomez walked composedly up to the prostrate form, touched the man's mouth with the girdle of his habit, blessed him thrice, and, lo! without doctor or drugs the supposed corpse got up as fresh and lively as though nothing had happened.

"A miracle! a miracle!" shouted the crowd, and they tried to carry off the friar in triumph. But he, to escape the threatened ovation, ran away as fast as he could to the monastery and shut himself up in his cell.

When he finally emerged and wended his way to the infirmary, he found San Francisco Solano stretched out on a cot, suffering agonies from a sick-headache. The friar felt his pulse and then said to him:

"You are very weak, father; it will do you good to take a mouthful of food."

"But, brother," answered the saint, "I have no appetite."

"Only make an effort, father; take just a little bite."

And Friar Gomez insisted so strenuously that the sick man, to get rid of his troublesome pertinacity, determined to ask for something that even the viceroy could not have obtained, for the delicacy in question was quite out of season.

"Very good, then, brother," he said. "There is only one dish, though, that I would relish, and that is a few trout."

Friar Gomez quietly thrust his right hand into the left sleeve of his habit and straightway drew out some trout, so fresh that one would have said they had just been taken from the water.

"Here you have them," he exclaimed. "May they do you good."

And, truth to tell, San Francisco was cured by them as by a charm.

One morning, as Friar Gomez was sitting in his cell, plunged in deep meditation, he heard a discreet tapping at the door, and a plaintive voice exclaimed:

"*Deo gratias*—the Lord be praised."

"Forever and ever, amen. Enter, brother," replied the friar.

Whereupon there came into the cell a tattered individual, whose face, however, bore the stamp of the proverbial honesty of the Castilian of the olden time. The entire furniture of the cell consisted of four leather-covered chairs, a grimy table, and a cot without feather-

bed, sheets, or covering of any sort, and with a stone for a bolster or pillow.

"Be seated, brother," said Friar Gomez, "and tell me without hesitation what brings you."

"Well, father, I can truly say that I am an honest man, and——"

"We are quite ready to believe that, and you must continue to be so, for you will thus have a quiet conscience in this world and happiness in the world to come."

"I am a peddler, with a large family to support, and I can't make my trade prosper for want of capital, not because of idleness or lack of industry on my part."

"That I am very glad to hear," rejoined the friar, "for God is sure to help anyone who works honestly."

"But it seems, father, that God has turned a deaf ear to me, and is very slow in coming to my help."

"Don't despair, brother; don't despair."

"But I have gone from door to door asking for a credit of five hundred *pesos*, and every door has been shut against me. So, last night, in turning the matter over in my mind, I said to myself: 'Come, Juan, pluck up your courage. Go and ask Friar Gomez for the money. If he wishes, beggarly poor as he is, he will find a way to help you out of all your troubles!' And so, here I am, and I beg and pray, father, that you will lend me the little sum for six months."

"What could make you think, my son," queried the friar, "that you could find such a sum in this poor cell?"

"That I can't tell you, father; but I know that you will not send me away disappointed."

"Your faith has saved you, brother," rejoined the friar. "Just wait a moment."

And, casting his eyes over the bare, whitewashed walls of his cell, he espied a scorpion slowly crawling along the window-frame. Tearing a leaf from an old book, he carefully picked off the insect, wrapped it up in the paper, and, turning to the old Castilian, said:

"Take this, my good man, and pawn it. But be sure to bring it back to me within six months."

The peddler blurted out his thanks, took his leave of the frair, and ran as fast as he could to the booth of a money-lender.

The jewel was a splendid one, worthy to have sparkled on the breast of a Moorish queen, to say the least. It was a brooch figuring a scorpion, the body formed of a magnificent emerald, and the head of a diamond, with rubies for the eyes.

The money-lender, who was a connoisseur, gazed with greedy eyes on the gorgeous jewel, and offered to advance two thousand *pesos*. Our old Castilian, however, persisted in only accepting a loan of five hundred *pesos* for six months, with usurious interest, of course.

They came to terms and the necessary papers were duly signed, the money-lender cherishing the hope that the owner of the pledge would come back for more money, and that by compounding the interest, he would eventually gain possession of a jewel as remarkable for its artistic merit as for its intrinsic value.

But the peddler made such good use

of his little capital that he was able to redeem the pledge before the six months were over. Wrapping it up in the same paper in which he had brought it, he returned it to Friar Gomez.

The friar took out the scorpion from the paper, set it on the window-sill, recited a blessing over it, and said:

"Little creature of God, go your way!"

And the scorpion began to crawl away over the walls of the cell.

Conky Stiles

As near as I could find out, nobody ever knew how Conky Stiles came to know as much of the Bible as he did. Thirty years ago people as a class were much better acquainted with the Bible than folks are nowadays, and there wasn't another one of 'em in the whole Connecticut valley from the Canada line to the Sound, that could stand up 'longside of Conky Stiles and quote Scripture. Well, he knew the whole thing by heart—from Genesis, chapter first, to the Amen at the end of the Revelation of St. John the Divine; that's the whole business in a nutshell!

His name wasn't Conky; we called him Conky for short. His real name was Silas Stiles, but one time at a Sunday-school convention, Mr. Hubbell, the minister, spoke of him as a "veritable concordance of Holy Scriptures," and so we boys undertook to call him "Concordance," but bimeby that name got whittled down to "Conky," and "Conky" stuck to him all the rest of his life.

When Conky was eight years old he got the prize at our Sunday-school for having committed to memory the most Bible verses in the year, and that same spring he got up and recited every line of the Acts of Apostles without having to be prompted once. By the time he was twelve years old he knew the whole Bible by heart, and most of the hymn book, too, although, as I have said, the Bible was his specialty.

Conky was always hearty and cheery; we all felt good when he was round. We never minded the way he had of quotin' things from the Bible. It was like this; Conky, we'll say, would be goin' down the road, and I'd come out of the house and holler: "Hello, there, Conky! where be you goin'?"

Then he'd say: "John xxi:3."* That would be all he'd say, and that would be enough; for it gave us to understand that he was goin' a-fishin'. Conky never made a mistake; his quotations were always right.

The habit grew on him as he got older. Associating with Conky for fifteen or twenty minutes wasn't much different from readin' the Bible for a couple of days, except that there wa'n't any manual labor about it. I guess he'd have been a minister, if the war hadn't come along and spoiled it all.

In the fall of 1862 there was a war meetin' in the town-hall, and Elijah Cutler made a speech urgin' the men

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* "Simon Peter saith unto them, I go afishing. . . ."

folks to come forward and contribute their services—their lives, if need be—to the cause of freedom and right. We were all keyed up with excitement, for next to Wendell Phillips and Henry Ward Beecher, I guess that Elijah Cutler was the greatest orator that ever lived. While we were shiverin' and waitin' for somebody to lead off, Conky Stiles rose up and says: "1 Kings xix: 20," says he, and with that he put on his hat and walked out of the meetin'.

"Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee."

That's what Conky said, or as good as said, and that's what he meant, too.

He didn't put off his religion when he put on his uniform. Conky Stiles, soldier or civilian, was always a livin', walkin' encyclopedy of the Bible, a human compendium of psalms and proverbs and texts; and I had that confidence in him that I'd have bet he wrote the Bible himself if I hadn't known better and to the contrary.

We were with McClellan a long spell. There was a heap of sickness among the boys, for we weren't used to the climate, and most of us pined for the comforts of home. Lookin' back over the thirty years that lie between this time and that, I see one figure loomin' up, calm and bright and beautiful, in the midst of fever and sufferin' and privation and death; I see a homely, earnest face, radiant with sympathy and love and hope, and I hear Conky Stiles' voice again speaking comfort and cheer to all about him. We all loved him; he stood next to Mr. Lincoln and General McClellan in the heart of everybody in the regiment.

They sent a committee down from our town, one Thanksgiving time, to bring a lot of good things, and to see how soon we were going to capture Richmond. Mr. Hubbell, the minister, was one of them. Deacon Cooley was another. There was talk at one time that Conky had a soft spot in his heart for the deacon's eldest girl, Tryphena, but I always allowed that he paid as much attention to the other daughter, Tryphosa, as he did to her elder sister, and I guess he hadn't any more hankerin' for one than he had for the other, for when the committee come to go home, Conky says to Deacon Cooley: "Well, good-by, Deacon," says he, "Romans xvi:12." *

The histories don't say anything about the skirmish we had with the rebels at Churchill's Bridge, along in May of '64, but we boys who were there remember it as the toughest fight in all our experience. They were just desperate, the Confederates were, and—well, we were mighty glad that the night came, for a soldier can retreat in the dark with fewer chances of interruption. Out of our company of one hundred and fifty, only sixty were left. You can judge from that of what the fighting was at Churchill's Bridge. When they called the roll in camp next day, Conky Stiles wasn't there.

Had we left him dead at the bridge, or was he wounded, dying the more awful death of hunger, thirst, and neglect?

One said: "Let's go back for Conky!"

A detachment of cavalry went out to reconnoiter. Only the ruins of the preceding day remained where we boys

* "Salute Tryphæna and Tryphosa who labor in the Lord."

had stood and stood and stood—only to be repulsed at last. Bluecoats and graycoats lay side by side and over against one another in the reconciling peace of death. Occasionally a maimed body, containing just a remnant of life, was found, and one of these crippled bodies was what was left of Conky.

When the surgeon saw the minie hole there in his thigh, and the saber gash here in his temple, he shook his head, and we knew what that meant.

We heard Conky's voice once again. For when, just at the last, he opened his eyes and saw that we were there, he smiled, feeble like, and the grace of the Book triumphed once more within him, and he says—it seemed almost like a whisper, he spoke so low: "Good-by, boys; 2 Timothy iv: 7."

And then, though his light went out, the sublime truth of his last words shone from his white, peaceful face:

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith!"

The Woman at Corfu

THE country bordering on the sea-coast on the way from Reggio to Gaeta has ever been esteemed the most delightful region of Italy, and that part of it near to Salerno, which looks direct upon the sea, and which the inhabitants call the coast of Malfi, is full of small towns, gardens, and fountains, and abounds in trade and merchandise. In one of these towns, called Ravello, many rich men are still to be found, and not long since a very wealthy man dwelt there, named Landolfo Ruffolo, who not being content with the riches he had acquired, but coveting to double them, was in danger of losing both his fortune and his life together. This man, after the custom of merchants, having made his calculations, purchased a large ship, and lading her with an assortment of merchandise, sailed to the Isle of Cyprus. When, however, he arrived there with his cargo, he found a number of vessels which had anticipated him with goods of the same description as his own; in consequence of which he was not only obliged to sell his cargo at a cheap rate, but almost to give it away, to his great loss and mortification. Whereupon grieving exceedingly, and not knowing what to do, seeing himself thus suddenly reduced from a state of affluence to low poverty, he resolved to die, or to indemnify himself for his losses on other people, rather than to return home a beggar, after having always maintained the rank of a wealthy man. Having found a purchaser for his own ship, he with the money arising from it, and from the proceeds of his merchandise, purchased a small swift-sailing brigantine, well calculated for a pirate vessel, which he fitted up with everything requisite for a service of that nature. He now began to capture the vessels of other merchants, but particularly of the Turks, and fortune in this enterprise favoured him more than she had done in his mercantile adventures. In the space of one year he had robbed and taken so much from the Turks, that he was not

only indemnified for the loss of all his merchandise, but his wealth was wholly doubled. Finding his misfortunes thus liberally requited, and being now content, and thinking it would be folly to hazard this second fortune, he concluded on returning home, and resolved not to risk his money in the purchase of any more merchandise, but to return in the same vessel in which he had repaired his losses. He accordingly ordered his men to put forth their oars with all expedition. When they were now in the mid-ocean, a gale arose which was not only contrary to their course, but caused such a dreadful sea, that the small boat being unable to live in it, they made all haste to land, and in the expectation of a more friendly wind entered a little port in a small island, and there sheltered themselves. A little time after, two great carracks of Genoa, on their return from Constantinople, driven by the same storm, also sought a refuge in the same port. The people on board the latter seeing the owner's name, and hearing him to be very rich, blocked up her passage; and as men are naturally addicted to covet after money and spoil, they resolved to make her their own as a prize at sea. Landing, therefore, some of their men, well armed with crossbows and other weapons, they prevented any person issuing out of the vessel, and entering on board, took full possession of her, throwing all the men overboard, and sparing only Landolfo himself, whom they put on board one of the carracks, leaving him nothing but his clothes; and having rifled the vessel of all her treasure, they sunk her in the sea.

On the day following, the storm having abated, the carracks again set sail, and had a prosperous voyage until evening, when the wind began to blow with more violence than before, and swelled the sea in such rude storms, that the two vessels were separated from each other. The carrack in which the wretched Landolfo lay was by the fury of the tempest driven against a rock (beneath the isle of Cephalonia), and, like a glass against a wall, dashed into a thousand pieces, the goods and merchandise, chests, coffers, and beds, and other things, floating in the sea. But notwithstanding the darkness of the night and raging of the waves, the crew attempted to save their lives, some by swimming, and others by catching hold of such things as floated near them, amongst whom the miserable Landolfo, desirous to save his life if possible, espied a chest or coffer before him, ordained to be the means of saving him from drowning. Now, although the day before he had wished for death infinite times rather than to return home in such wretched poverty, yet, seeing how other men strove to save their lives, he took advantage of this favour offered him, and keeping fast hold of the coffer as well as he could, and being driven at will by the winds and waves, he supported himself till day appeared. He then looked all around him, and saw nothing but clouds, the sea, the coffer, which one while slipped from under him, and at another time supported him, as the winds and waves drove it. All that day and the ensuing night he floated on the water, drinking more than he wished, and nearly perishing for food. The next morning, by the will of Providence or the force of the winds, Landolfo, who was well-nigh become a sponge, holding his arms strongly about

the chest, as a man in fear of drowning snatches at the smallest succour, drew near unto the shore of the island of Corfu, where, by good fortune, a poor woman, but a notable housewife, was scouring her dishes with the salt water and sand. When she saw the chest drawing near her, and not being able to discover what it was, she grew fearful, and retiring from it, cried out aloud. Landolfo had not the power to speak to her, if he had seen her, being exhausted and almost senseless; but even as the winds and waves pleased, the chest was driven still nearer to the land, and then the woman perceived that it had the form of a coffer, and looking more carefully, beheld two arms extended over it, and afterwards she perceived the face of a man, though she was not able to judge whether or not he were alive. Moved by charitable and womanly compassion, she stepped in among the billows, and getting fast hold of Landolfo by the hair of his head, drew both the chest and him to land, and calling for her daughter to help her, with much difficulty she unfolded his arms from the chest, setting it upon her daughter's head, and then between them Landolfo was led into the town, and there conveyed into a warm room, where, by care, he soon recovered his strength, having been benumbed with extreme cold. After administering to him broth and wine, his senses became somewhat restored, and he saw where he was, but knew not in what manner he had been brought thither, until the good woman showed him the coffer that had kept him floating on the waves, and, next to God, had been the means of saving his life. The chest seemed of such slender weight that nothing of any value could be expected in it, either to recompense the woman's great pains and kindness bestowed on him, or for any matter of his own benefit. Nevertheless, the woman being absent, he opened the chest, and found innumerable precious stones therein, some costly and curious set in gold, and others not fixed in any metal. Being instantly aware of their great worth and value, from his knowledge of such articles, he became much comforted, thanking God for his great success, and such an admirable means of deliverance from danger. Then reflecting that in a short space of time he had been twice beaten and buffeted by fortune, lest a third misfortune might follow, he consulted with himself how he might safely bring so rich a booty to his own house. Wherefore, that no suspicion might attach to him, having taken out the jewels, he told the good woman that the chest was of no further service to him; but if she pleased to lend him a small sack or bag, she might keep the coffer, as it might be useful to her in divers ways in her house. The woman gladly conformed to his desires, and Landolfo returned her infinite thanks for the kindness she had shown him; and throwing his sack on his neck, passed by sea to Branditio, and from thence to Tranium, where the merchants of the city bestowed good garments on him, he acquainting them with his disastrous fortunes, but not a word concerning his last good success. Being come home in safety to Ravello, he fell on his knees and thanked God for all His mercies to him. Then opening the sack, and viewing the jewels more at leisure than he had formerly done,

he found them to be of such great value, that, selling them only at a very reasonable price, he was three times richer than when he departed from his home. Having disposed of them all, he sent a large sum of money to the good woman at Corfu, who had rescued him out of the sea, and saved his life in a danger so dreadful. The like he did at Tranium to the merchants that had newly clothed him, living richly upon the remainder, and never adventuring more on the sea, but ending his days in wealth and honour.

Death of the Arch-Sorcerer

One day, Dr. Johannes Faustus sent tidings to those masters, students, and other boon companions with whom he kept company, and entreated that they would please join him in a pleasure party, as far as the village of Himlig, about half a mile from Wittenburg University, where he proposed that they should sup together. To this invitation they replied that they would willingly assemble for that purpose; and accordingly a sumptuous feast was ordered to be in readiness, with abundance of delicacies and wines.

When they met, the Doctor seemed to welcome his friends in great good spirits, but his heart was inwardly heavy and sad. He bade them, however, to be seated, and to enjoy themselves that evening along with him, as well as remain there the whole of that night, as he had some important business on which to consult them. They promised, and sat down to feast with him; on the conclusion of which, as they were about to take a farewell glass, and Doctor Faustus had settled the score, he begged the students to retire into another room with him, as he had something rather particular to communicate to them. So he showed them into another chamber, and then began to address them as follows.

"My very loving and gracious young lords and masters, hear the cause for which I have summoned you together; namely, that which during many years you are acquainted with, as to what kind of a man I have been, expert in what kind of arts and sorceries, only to be acquired under the tuition of the devil, to which devilish inclination and pursuits I have been brought by keeping bad company, and all sort of dissipation connected with such society, in which also I have acted the chief part. This, my dear young gentlemen, comes of walking according to our wicked flesh and blood, our own impious and abandoned will, and giving way to those speculating and diabolical thoughts, which at length led me to consign myself over to Satan, after the expiration of four and twenty years, both with life and soul.

"Now, the said years are already arrived at an end even this very evening, so that my last sands are running quickly out before my eyes, when he will come to claim me upon the strength of my bond signed with my own blood for life and soul, which I have twice over conveyed to him. Wherefore, my

dear masters, I have thus affectionately entreated of you to come and be present at my latter end, and to take St. Jan's departing glass with me, while at the same time you will please to keep secret my departure hence. I would likewise require of you, my gracious young masters, to salute on my part my other friends and acquaintance, assuring them of my very brotherly regard for them, that they may so too regard my memory kindly, and not reproachfully, soliciting their forgiveness in everything where I may have come short or offended them. In regard to my most wonderful adventures and performances during the space of twenty-four years, such will be found after my catastrophe accurately recorded and described in my own house. And now let my cruel approaching end serve as a faithful mirror to you, my young gentlemen and masters all, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord in view, and love and pray to Him as becomes you to do; to pray, I say, that He will please to protect you from the devil's wiles and guiles, upholding you that none may fall away from Him, as I, poor impious damned man, have so sadly done, denying the cross, the sacraments of our Saviour, and even the Supreme Ruler of the world Himself. Be cautious also how you are led astray by bad company as I have been, but go constantly to church, and manfully resist the devil with a firm faith in Christ, leading an upright and godly life, to the edification of all your neighbours.

"Finally, it is my earnest prayer that you will all go to bed and try to sleep as usual. Moreover, you must not alarm yourselves, whatever kind of rout and uproar you may happen to hear, as you may rest assured that you will receive no degree of injury. Do not even attempt to rise, for it can do no manner of good; and if you should find my dead body in the morning, please to inter it speedily without any ceremony, inasmuch as I die a base and unchristian death. Yes, I die like a most unchristian wretch, feeling only a sort of sham repentance, and not possessing faith half sufficient to inspire me with sincere prayer; besides knowing that the devil will have my life, which indeed I would freely resign to him if I could by any means contrive to preserve my soul. I have only once more to entreat that you will make yourselves easy and retire to rest; therefore I wish you a very good night;—but for me, alas! a very bad and frightful one."

This explanation was made by Doctor Faustus with a free and resolute air, in order not to alarm or cast down the spirits of his friends, who, however, could not sufficiently express their surprise and consternation at his having carried matters to such a pitch. For they had never conceived him capable of such excessive foolhardiness as to venture life and soul in pursuit of his vain sorceries and speculations. On this account, having a sincere regard for him, they began one and all to lament over his hard fate, and they said, "Alas! dear Faustus, into what a cursed dilemma you have brought yourself! and all by keeping the matter so long secret: why did you not unfold it to us? Ah, we would soon have rescued you from all his infernal snares, with the help of our learned divines and other doctors; but now it is all too late, you are too deeply inveigled, both life and soul."

Doctor Faustus made answer: "Re-

veal the matter, dear friends, I dared not, though believe me I was often on the point of doing so, wishing much to consult you, and to retrace my evil steps and do penance for my sins. But I was seduced from one kind of sorcery to another, and whenever I made good resolutions to repent, that great Satan forthwith made his appearance, as he will again do this very night, and threatening me, always said, 'I will make an end of you, I will tear you piecemeal the moment you talk of turning to Heaven for help.'" Upon hearing this, the students replied that as there was plainly no other help for him, he ought forthwith to cry out with all his strength and heartily to the Lord, and to His dearly-beloved Son Jesus Christ, praying for the remission of his sins, in which good office they would gladly join him, and cry, "Alas, alas! be merciful unto me, poor sinner! and bring me not unto judgment, for too well I know that I cannot stand before it. What though the devil may come and claim this my mortal body? it is only Thou who canst defend and protect the immortal soul."

Doctor Faustus admitted the wisdom of this measure, and that he ought not for an instant to cease to pray; but at the same time he could not go through with it, as it happened also to Cain, who said that his sins were too great to be forgiven; and the Doctor could not help exclaiming within himself, that he was bound by his own bonds, and had carried matters too far to retreat.

So the students were at length compelled to take leave of the unhappy Master Faustus, which they did with many tears, all retiring to the same chamber, and leaving the Doctor by himself. They retired to bed as they had been directed; but not one of them could close his eyes, for they lay waiting fearfully anxious for the catastrophe.

This happened between twelve and one o'clock the same night. First there was heard a high wind, which blew round all quarters of the house, as if it would have carried it from its foundations, at which the students leaped out of bed in great alarm. But they ventured not out of the chamber, striving to encourage each other; but the terrified host himself actually leaped out of his own house into one next adjoining. The students' chamber was next to that of Faustus, and they could plainly hear a grievous piping, hissing, and whining, just as if the house were full of snakes and other poisonous reptiles. Next they heard the Doctor's room door give way, upon which repeated cries of "Help, help!" were uttered in a half-drowned voice, which grew fainter and fainter. Soon, however, all was still and silent as before. When at length it became broad day, the students, who had never closed their eyes during the whole of that fearful night, went in a body to the Doctor's chamber. But there he was no longer to be seen, though they found different parts of it sprinkled with his blood, and traces of his brains were also seen upon the walls, as if, after wringing his neck round, the devil had dashed his head from one side of the room to the other. His eyes too appeared to have started from their sockets, and a solitary tooth was found lying here and there, which furnished a cruel spectacle indeed. Seeing all these symbols of his fate, the students began to weep and lament him afresh,

and nothing was heard for some time but their mingled moans and sighs.

At length, after a long and weary search, they found his corpse lying at a distance from the house, sadly mutilated and disfigured, in particular about the face. The foresaid students and masters who had been present at his departure, after interring his body in the same village, again returned with heavy hearts to Wittenburg. First they went to Doctor Faustus' house, where they found his servant Wagenar, who was greatly grieved and anxious also about his master's death. There too they discovered his own history drawn up and described, in the third person, by the Doctor's own hand, with the exception of the account of his final departure and end, which was added by the said masters and students, though the whole work was arranged and remodelled by his servant Wagenar, so as to form a new book. On the same date likewise the figure of the enchanted Helena, whose beauty the Doctor had conjured up from the shades to give zest to his earthly pleasures, again vanished from the earth. And long afterwards the strange noises and disturbances which were heard at all hours in the house where he had lived, prevented any one from residing in it. Moreover Doctor Faustus himself appeared to his faithful Wagenar in the night, and then communicated a number of secret and abstruse matters, and he was seen out of the windows often reading to a late hour.

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In addition to the above testimonials of the Doctor's veritable existence, there might here be submitted those of an English gentleman who resided in Germany during some part of the sixteenth century; but we can only afford space for one or two of the most conclusive and authentic. From their local details and accuracy they go far to establish the facts contained in the Doctor's lamentable history, and are fully sufficient, we apprehend, to dispel all further doubts, and set the question at rest for ever. They are extracted from an old English work entitled, "The Second Report of Doctor John Faustus, containing his appearances, and the deedes of Wagner. Written by an English gentleman, student in Wittenberg, an University of Germany, in Saxony. Published for the delight of all those which desire novelties, by a friend of the same gentleman. London, printed by Abell Jeffes, for Cuthbert Burby, and are to be sold at the middle shop, at Saint Milfred's Church, by the Stockes. 1594."

"First, there is yet remaining the ruins of his house, not farre from Melancthon's house as they call, at the towne's end of Wittenberg, right opposite to the schooles.

"Secondly, there is yet to be seene his tree, a great hollowe truncke wherein he used to reade nigromancy to his schollers, not farre from towne, in a very remote place, which I thinke is sufficient testimony to any reasonable eare. And enquire of them which have been there, see if they will not affirme it. Notwithstanding, I doe not goe, by these meanes I, to entreate men to beleeve, for I care not whether they do or no, but onely to certifie you of the trueth as I myselfe would bee.

"Next, his tombe is at Mar's Temple, a three miles beyond the citty, upon which is written on a marble stone, by

his owne hand, this epitaph, which is somewhat old, by reason of his small skill in graving.

"The stone was found in his study, and his will was fulfilled, and he lieth betwixt a heap of three and thirty fir trees, in the fort of the hill, in a great hole, where this is erected."

HIC JACEO JOHANNES FAUSTUS, DOCTOR DIVINI JURIS INDIGNISSIMUS, QUI PRO AMORE MAGIÆ DIABOLICÆ SCIENTIÆ, VANISSIME CEDIDI AB AMORE DEI. O LECTOR, PRO ME MISERRIMO DAMNATO HOMINE NE PRECEDERIS, NAM PRECES NON JUVANT QUEM DEUS CONDEMNAVIT. O PIE CHRISTIANE, MEMENTO MEI, ET SALTEM SUAM PRO INFIDUCIA MEA LACHRYMULAM EXPRIME, ET CUI NON POTES MEDERI, EJUS MISERERE, ET IPSE CAVE.

Mazeppa's Guide

In a splendidly decorated sleeping apartment stood a high bed with plumes at the corners. Behind the half-drawn bed-curtain lay an old man of sixty-three with the coverlet pulled up under his beard, his long white hair spread over the pillow. His whole forehead was hidden under a plaster. It was Mazeppa.

Beside the bed, among cups of medicine on the carpet, lay several books of Latin and French poetry, and at the door a little wizened priest carried on a whispered conversation with two green-clad messengers from Czar Peter.

"He scarcely comprehends your words," whispered the priest, giving a painfully searching look toward the sick man. "He even lies speechless for long periods. Who could have imagined that the old man with his joy of life would suddenly lie on his death-bed?"

"Ivan Stefanovitch," one of the strangers said with raised voice, approaching the bed, "our magnanimous czar, your lord, sends you greeting. Do you remember? Those three Cossacks of yours who stole off to him and related that you secretly planned a rebellion against his over-lordship, he has had them fettered and returned to you as gifts of friendship. Ivan Stefanovitch, he relies on your loyalty."

Mazeppa's eyes opened feebly and his lips moved, but he was only able to utter an unintelligible whisper.

"We understand you," cried the messengers, speaking all at once. "We understand you. You greet him and thank him for his favour, and we are to say to him that you are bowed under your years and that you have already turned all your thoughts to that which is not of this world."

"I fear," murmured the priest to them aside, "that here it will soon be over."

The messengers nodded sadly, and backed out of the sleeping apartment.

As soon as they were out, the priest bolted the door.

"They have gone," he said.

Mazeppa sat up and tore the plaster from his brow, throwing it far across the carpet. His dark wide-open eyes gleamed and twinkled. A flush rose and paled on his cheeks, and under the handsomely curving nose shone teeth as white and fresh as a youth's. He tossed away the coverlet and, fully clad from tip to toe in long-coat and boots with spurs, he sprang from the bed, and jestingly pinched the priest in the ribs.

"You little rascal priest, you! You vagabond! This time we didn't manage badly. In Moscow they will believe that old Mazeppa is lying helpless and harmless. God be gracious to his pious soul! Hahahey! You little rascal priest, you! You arch-hypocrite!"

The priest laughed dryly. He was a deposed bishop from Bulgaria, and his round head with its short nose and deep-sunken eyes was like a skull.

Mazeppa grew still livelier.

"Mazeppa dying! Ay, ask his mistresses! Only ask them! No, my great Muscovite czar, you, now I am going to live and be quits with you."

"The czar suspects you, my lord, but he wishes to disarm you with magnanimity. He can be like that."

"And I should have been conquered by it, if one night at table, when we were drunk, he had not struck me on the ear. I value my ear as he does his, and an insult I can never forgive. It sticks in the soul and frets and gnaws. If I am not a king by birth, I am one in soul. And what does he want with his German coats on my splendid Cossacks? Now to business! Relate your adventures, you liar!"

"My lord, dressed as a mendicant monk, I went forth on my way to the Swedish headquarters. Sometimes I set a tavern lass on my knee and a can on the table corner, but when I peeped down and saw the toes sticking out of my ragged shoes, I thought to myself: This is Mazeppa's ambassador!"

"Very good, but how did you find the dandy?"

"The dandy?"

"To be sure. His Swedish Majesty, King Carolus. Don't you believe he dandifies as much with his grimy rags as any French prince of scented water with his silk stockings? And he possesses that wonderful Northern recklessness which continually snaps a riding-whip and cries: 'Rubbish! that's nothing! It's no matter!'—He has never been able to grieve for a misfortune longer than overnight. That has been the secret of his power. Woe to him and his fate when he sits up night after night without sleep! I am curious to see him. I long for it. But tell on!"

"First I found him in wig and armour on the tavern lass's neckcloth or pinafore, and on the glass from which I drank, and on the icing I ate, and on table-cloths and chest-lids and tobacco-boxes and market-booths. No one spoke of anything else than of him, and the children arranged themselves and played at Swedish divine service. The old peasants called him the sword-pope of the Protestants chosen by God Himself, and took off their hats in speaking of him."

"Ah yes, but how did you find him himself, when you came to headquarters?"

"I warn you. I predict misfortunes. I saw an omen. I found him puffed up and haughty of spirit."

"As a great personality of whom the world begins to disapprove."

"Marlborough, after an audience in Saxony, left his camp with a shrug of the shoulders, and sovereigns begin to laugh at him behind his back. His own generals have grown weary."

"He has become a hero of the rabble, you think. Well, even then, that's the sort of man I need to gather the wild hordes. If you do not assure me that you have seen him eat and drink, I cannot believe that he is a living human being. Then I should have to say: The young prince of the Swedes fell in the tumult of victory at Narva, but his shade rides ever on before his troops. Snow falls and falls, and drums rattle and rumble, and the thinning battalions do not know and do not understand whither he leads them. When the enemy recognize him in the powder-smoke, they lower their muskets in superstitious awe and dare not shoot, and he does not notice that sometimes he cuts down men who are making ready to fall on their knees. Hired assassins throw down their weapons at sight of him and give themselves up—and he lets them go unpunished. Don't talk to him about states and treaties! He does not fight for possessions as men do; he wields the sword of God to revenge and reward. What did he require just now as the reward of victory at the conclusion of peace? Money? Land? Of Austria he required a councillor who had slandered him at table and a swarm of Russian soldiers who had fled in over the border—and freedom of conscience for the Protestants. Of Prussia he demanded the imprisonment of a colonel who had given counsel to the czar, and banishment for a writer who had cavilled at his stipulations against the Pietists. Of Saxony he demanded Patkull and all Swedish renegades, but freedom for the Princes Sobieski and all Saxons who had gone over to the Swedes. King August himself he compelled to pack up the old Polish regalia in a velvet trunk and send them to King Stanislaus. And now, since he has deposed King August in Poland, he wants to depose the czar or challenge him to a duel, but their crowns and governments he would not even take as a gift. Since antiquity no stranger man has held a sword or a sceptre."

Mazeppa, while he was speaking, grasped one of the bedposts so hard that the plumes of the silken canopy shook.

But the other lifted three fingers and replied: "I have warned you. Everything that he touches he dedicates to misery and death. Yet he is the patron saint of adventurers. He has raised adventure to stability and greatness. You too, my lord, are an adventurer, and I myself am the worst adventurer of you all. Therefore I will be compliant."

He lowered his hand and drew near with disrespectful familiarity. "You, Ivan Stefanovitch! Have you never wondered that I directed my steps to your particular door?"

"You were driven from your episcopal see because of your unfaith and your pranks."

"It really amounted to a little pilfering of small import. There were on the ikonstand a couple of emeralds—"

"Which you replaced with bits of glass and in all secrecy sold, so that you might live more bountifully and

in a manner more worthy a servant of the church."

"Let us say no more about it!—So I heard of Mazeppa, the former page at Johann Casimir's court, who in his powdered wig was attentive to the wayward sex so long that a jealous husband at last bound him naked on a horse's back and drove him forth into the wilderness. And there he built up a kingdom of adventurers. Saint Andrew guarded you, Mazeppa. I needed a little master who would be ashamed to strike off a good head, who would let me read my Greek and my Machiavelli in peace, and to whom I might say: 'Agreed, old fellow! It's all a shadow play, even this that you are lord and I servant.' Therefore I came to you. My adventurer's blood cannot bear to sit still, and I weary of your wine mixed with water, for you are a great miser, Mazeppa; but as you are now pondering a financial transaction in musket-balls, I follow you. And as the Swedish king no longer listens to his generals or to the beseeching letters from his grandmother and his people, and comes hither by the most perilous and impossible roads, he wishes to accept your offer of an alliance. With you and your Cossacks he will march against your lord. Here are the papers."

The priest shook off his cope and stood in Cossack dress with pistols in his girdle, and from his bosom he drew forth some folded papers.

Mazeppa grew pale, seized them, and held them pressed long to his mouth, while he sank his forehead and bowed as before the invisible image of a saint.

"Drums, drums!" he stammered in agitation.

But when the priest had got to the door, he checked him.

"No, don't let the drums strike up before to-morrow."

Thereupon he went to a plain wooden table in a little side-room, and sat down over his account books. He had his bailiffs summoned, and calculated and calculated, and prescribed greater economy in the milk department. Half a merry knight of the roads and half a learned but thrifty proprietor of lands, he finally superintended the packing of his many trunks and boxes. Sometimes he bent down and helped. Last of all, next morning he put on an old-fashioned and much-adorned Cossack costume. Impetuous and active, he sprang up from his chair as soon as he had sat down, but he remained standing before the mirror for some little time, now and then running his delicate, small white hand through his beard.

As soon as the music was heard, he mounted to the saddle and kept his charger constantly at a gallop.

* * * * * * *

When, after a time, he had come to the Swedes and was riding one morning through a flurry of snow in the king's retinue, the priest, as if by accident, pulled up his horse alongside him. Round about the troops marched past, sprinkled with grime, their weapons and cannon covered to prevent rusting. Baggage wagons clattered along with their weight of provision sacks and sick men, and sometimes with a covered coffin. Last were driven massed herds of cattle. Drunken Zaporogeans, prancing Cossacks, and eagerly drumming Polish Wallachians rode in green and red cloaks and with high brass helmets on which bells were tinkling. Some

were brandishing tufted spears and bows or long flint-locks inlaid with silver and ivory. Others played on a sort of wailing wooden pipe. It was a colourful, legendary sort of march, that went over untrodden and unknown forest paths, over frozen marshes, and under snowy fir trees toward the mysterious East.

"Mazeppa," the priest began in a low voice, "you promised to come to the Swedes with thirty thousand Cossacks, but hardly four thousand followed you."

Mazeppa kept his roan at a gallop, and nodded in silence, and the priest never wearied of his gibes.

"Day before yesterday half of these went off. Yesterday more still. Soon you will have barely a couple of hundred fellows, barely the servants who watch over your trunks and the two barrels with your money. Your uprising was betrayed, your cities are burned, your few faithful men nailed on boards and thrown into rivers. Soon you will be nothing but a gorgeous knight in the train of the Swedish king."

As Mazeppa was still, the priest continued: "To-day I too will abandon you, because the small beer of the Swedes tastes sour to me, and my toes stick out too far from my shoes. Your ambassador needs a richer lord. Farewell, Ivan Stefanovitch!"

Mazeppa replied, "As long as I have still my head and my philosophy, I remain Mazeppa. While my Cossacks turned and broke away, I had the hetman staff and mace carried before me, and I rode on to the king as if I had come in front of Xerxes' millions. And he, with his impoverished realm, his discontented generals, and his sinking sun, came toward me like the most fortunate among princes. What does it trouble him and me how many ride behind us? He has had enough of kingly honor, and wishes also to be a chosen man of God. He thinks of history as a man in love does of his sweetheart: he would not win her favor by his birth but by his person. If we two, he and I, should one day be the last survivors and sit in an earthern hut on the steppe, we should still continue to talk philosophy and treat each other as at a coronation dinner."

"You speak of his sinking sun. You have seen the omen, even you! He can no longer talk without boasting like a baggage driver."

"It is easy to be modest as long as everybody praises."

Mazeppa threw back his white-haired head with lofty contempt, and galloped forward to the king, who raised his hat and bowed and bowed again in his saddle.

Round about several of the generals joked as loudly as possible so that the king might hear them.

"When I come to Moscow," said Anders Lagerkrona, "I shall mend the seat of my trousers with the czar's night-cap."

"Pshaw!" answered Axel Sparre. "There is an old prophecy that a Sparre will some day be governor at the Kremlin."

"This way!" cried the ensigns. "Shoot down any one who dares to hinder such a great and exalted prince from marching forward wherever he chooses."

The king smiled and hummed: "Russia must run, Russia must run." But when the speakers were no longer within

his hearing, they were transformed and became absent and melancholy.

"Your Majesty!" cried Mazeppa in crisp Latin and with kindling eyes, "Your Majesty's conquering arms go on so far that one fine morning we shall have hardly eight miles more to Asia."

"As to that the authorities used to disagree," answered the king, moved, but hunting for the Latin words, his gaze fettered by Mazeppa's white and pleasingly mobile hands. "If the border is not far off, we must go there, so that we can say we were also in Asia."

The voices died away, and the priest reined in his horse.

"Asia!" he muttered, "Asia doesn't lie in the middle of Europe. But ride on, ride on with you, my adventurous lords! I have changed my name and dress so many times that none of you Swedes will ever notice what I was. But do not forget that it was the ragged monk, the vagabond, Mazeppa's ambassador, who by his cunning negotiations laid his blue-frozen finger on you and your demi-god's fate and directed you into the wildernesses. You are right, King Carolus, and you, Mazeppa. Everything depends at the last on individual men."

It snowed and snowed, and he sat motionless on his lean horse, while the battalions marched by, silent and impatient. When the last soldiers turned and looked back at the solitary, unknown rider, and saw his little compressed death-skull head, they were seized with fear and hastened their steps.

Smugglers of the Clone

"Rise, *Robin, rise! The partans are on the sands!*" The crying at our little window raised me out of a sound sleep, for I had been out seeing the Myreside lasses late the night before, and was far from being wake-rife at two by the clock on a February morning.

It was the first time the summons had come to me, for I was then but young. Hitherto it was my brother John who had answered the raising word of the free-traders spoken at the window. But now John had a farm-steading of his own, thanks to Sir William Maxwell and to my father's siller that had paid for the stock.

So with all speed I did my clothes upon me, with much eagerness and a beating heart—as who would not, when, for the first time, he has the privilege of man? As I went out to the barn I could hear my mother (with whom I was ever a favorite) praying for me.

"Save the laddie—save the laddie!" she said over and over.

And I think my father prayed too; but, as I went, he also cried to me counsels.

"Be sure you keep up the grappling chains—dinna let them clatter till ye hae the stuff weel up the hill. The Lord keep ye! Be a guid lad an' ride honestly. Gin ye see Sir William, keep your head doon, an' gae by without lookin'. He's a magistrate, ye ken. But he'll no' see you, gin ye dinna see him. Leave twa ankers a-piece o' brandy an' rum at our ain dyke back. An' abune a', the Lord

be wi' ye, an' bring ye safe back to your sorrowing parents!"

So, with pride, I did the harness graith upon the sonsy back of Brown Bess—the pad before where I was to sit—the lingtow and the hooked chains behind. I had a cutlass, a jockteleg (or smuggler's sheaf-knife), and a pair of brass-mounted pistols ready swung in my leathern belt. Faith, but I wish Bell of the Mains could have seen me then, ready to ride forth with the light-horsemen. She would never scorn me more for a lingle-backed callant, I 'se warrant.

"Haste ye, Robin! Heard ye no' that the partans are on the sands?"

It was Geordie of the Clone who cried to me. He meant the free-traders from the Isle, rolling the barrels ashore.

"I am e'en as ready as ye are your-sel'!" I gave him answer, for I was not going to let him boast himself prideful all, because he had ridden out with them once or twice before. Besides, his horse and accoutrement were not one half so good as mine. For my father was an honest and well-considered man, and in good standing with the laird and the minister, so that he could afford to do things handsomely.

We made haste to ride along the heuchs, which are very high, steep, and rocky at this part of the coast.

And at every loaning-end we heard the clinking of the smugglers' chains, and I thought the sound a livening and a merry one.

"A fair guid-e'en and a full tide, young Airyolan!" cried one to me as we came by Killantrae. And I own the name was sweet to my ears. For it was the custom to call men by the names of their farms, and Airyolan was my father's name by rights. But mine for that night, because in my hands was the honor of the house.

Ere we got down to the Clone we could hear, all about in the darkness, athwart and athwart, the clattering of chains, the stir of many horses, and the voices of men.

Black Taggart was in with his lugger, the "Sea Pyet," and such a cargo as the Clone men had never run—so ran the talk on every side. There was not a sleeping wife nor yet a man left indoors in all the parish of Mochrum, except only the laird and the minister.

By the time that we got down by the shore, there was quite a company of the Men of the Fells, as the shore men called us—all dour, swack, determined fellows.

"Here come the hill nowt!" said one of the village men, as he caught sight of us. I knew him for a limber-tongued, ill-livered loon from the Port, so I delivered him a blow fair and solid between the eyes, and he dropped without a gurgle. This was to learn him how to speak to innocent harmless strangers.

Then there was a turmoil indeed to speak about, for all the men of the laigh shore crowded round us, and knives were drawn. But I cried, "Corwald, Mochrum, Chippermore, here to me!" And all the stout lads came about me.

Nevertheless, it looked black for a moment, as the shore men waved their torches in our faces, and yelled fiercely at us to put us down by fear.

Then a tall young man on a horse rode straight at the crowd which had gathered about the loon I had felled. He had a mask over his face which sometimes slipped awry. But, in spite

of the disguise, he seemed perfectly well known to all there.

"What have we here?" he asked, in a voice of questioning that had also the power of command in it.

"'Tis these Men of the Fells that have stricken down Jock Webster of the Port, Maister William!" said one of the crowd.

Then I knew the laird's son, and did my duty to him, telling him of my provocation, and how I had only given the rascal strength of arm.

"And right well you did," said Maister William, "for these dogs would swatter in the good brandy, but never help to carry it to the caves, nor bring the well-graithed horses to the shore-side! Carry the loon away, and strap him into a heather hole till he come to."

So that was all the comfort they got for their tale-telling.

"And you, young Airyolan," said Maister William, "that are so ready with your strength of arm—there is even a job that you may do. Muckle Jock, the Preventive man, rides to-night from Isle of Whithorn, where he has been warning the revenue cutter. Do you meet him and keep him from doing himself an injury."

"And where shall I meet him, Maister William?" I asked of the young laird.

"Oh, somewhere on the heuch-taps," said he, carelessly; "and see, swing these on your horse and leave them at Myrtoun on the by-going."

He called a man with a torch, who came and stood over me, while I laid on Brown Bess a pair of small casks of some fine liqueur, of which more than ordinary care was to be taken, and also a few packages of soft goods, silks and laces as I deemed.

"Take these to the Loch Yett, and ca' Sandy Fergus to stow them for ye. Syne do your work with the Exciseman as he comes hame. Gar him bide where he is till the sun be at its highest to-morrow. And a double share o' the plunder shall be lyin' in the hole at a back of the dyke at Airyolan when ye ride hame the morn at e'en."

So I bade him a good-night, and rode my ways over the fields, and across many burns to Myrtoun. As I went I looked back, and there, below me, was a strange sight,—all the little harbor of the Clone lighted up, a hurrying of men down to the shore, the flickering of torches, and the lappering of the sea making a stir of gallant life that set the blood leaping along the veins. It was, indeed, I thought, worth while living to be a free-trader. Far out, I could see the dark spars of the lugger "Sea Pyet," and hear the casks and ankers dumping into the boats alongside.

Then I began to bethink me that I had a more desperate ploy than any of them that were down there, for they were many, and I was but one. Moreover, easily, as young Master William might say, "Meet Muckle Jock, and keep him till the morn at noon!" the matter was not so easy as supping one's porridge.

Now, I had never seen the Exciseman, but my brother had played at the cudgels with Jock before this. So I knew more of him than to suppose that he would bide for the bidding of one man when in the way of his duty.

But when the young laird went away he slipped me a small, heavy packet.

"Half for you and half for the gauger, gin he hears reason," he said.

By the weight and the jingle I judged

it to be yellow Geordies, the best thing that the wee, wee German lairdie ever sent to Tory Mochrun. And not too plenty there, either! Though since the Clone folk did so well with the clean-run smuggling from the blessed Isle of Man, it is true that there are more of the Geordies than there used to be.

So I rode round by the back of the White Loch, for Sir William had a habit of daunering, over by the Airlour and Barsalloch, and in my present ride I had no desire to meet with him.

Yet, as fate would have it, I was not to win clear that night. I had not ridden more than half-way round the loch when Brown Bess went floundering into a moss-hole, which are indeed more plenty than paved roads in that quarter. And what with the weight of the pack, and her struggling, we threatened to go down altogether. When I thought of what my father would say, if I went home with my finger in my mouth, and neither Brown Bess nor yet a penny's-worth to be the value of her, I was fairly a-sweat with fear. I cried aloud for help, for there were cot-houses near by. And, as I had hoped, in a little a man came out of the shadows of the willow bushes.

"What want ye, yochel?" said he, in a mightily lofty tone.

"I'll *'yochel'* ye, gin I had time. Pu' on that rope," I said, for my spirit was disturbed by the accident. Also, as I have said, I took ill-talk from no man.

So, with a little laugh, the man laid hold of the rope, and pulled his best, while I took off what of the packages I could reach, ever keeping my own feet moving, to clear the sticky glaur of the bog hole from them.

"Tak' that hook out, and ease doon the cask, man!" I cried to him, for I was in desperation; "I'll gie ye a heart-some gill, even though the stuff be Sir William's!"

And the man laughed again, being, as I judged, well enough pleased. For all that service yet was I not pleased to be called "yochel." But, in the meantime, I saw not how, at the moment, I could begin to cuff and clout one that was helping my horse and stuff out of a bog-hole. Yet I resolved somehow to be even with him, for, though a peaceable man, I never could abide the calling of ill names.

"Whither gang ye?" said he.

"To the Muckle Hoose o' Myrtoun," said I, "and gang you wi' me, my man; and gie me a hand doon wi' the stuff, for I hae nae stomach for mair warsling in bog-holes. And wha kens but that auld thrawn Turk, Sir William, may happen on us?"

"Ken ye Sir William Maxwell?" said the man.

"Na," said I. "I never so muckle as set e'en on the auld wretch. But I had sax hard days' wark cutting doon bushes, and makin' a road for his daftlike carriage wi' wheels, for him to ride in to Mochrum Kirk."

"Saw ye him never there?" said the man, as I strapped the packages on again.

"Na," said I, "my father is a Cameronian, and gangs to nae Kirk hereaboots."

"He has gi'en his son a bonny up-bringing, then!" quoth the man.

Now this made me mainly angry, for I cannot bide that folk should meddle with my folk. Though as far as I am concerned myself I am a peaceable man.

"Hear ye," said I, "I ken no wha ye

are that speers so mony questions. Ye may be the de'il himsel', or ye may be the enemy o' Mochrum, the blackavised Commodore frae Glasserton. But, I can warrant ye that ye'll no mell and claw unyeuked with Robin o' Airyolan. Hear ye that, my man, and keep a civil tongue within your ill-lookin' cheek, gin ye want to gang hame in the morning wi' an uncracked croun!"

The man said no more, and by his gait I judged him to be some serving man. For, as far as the light served me, he was not so well put on as myself. Yet there was a kind of neatness about the creature that showed him to be no outdoor man either.

However, he accompanied me willingly enough till we came to the Muckle House of Myrtoun. For I think that he was feared of his head at my words. And indeed it would not have taken the kittling of a flea to have garred me draw a staff over his crown. For there is nothing that angers a Galloway man more than an ignorant, upsetting town's body, putting in his gab when he desires to live peaceable.

So, when we came to the back entrance, I said to him: "Hear ye to this. Ye are to make no noise, my mannie, but gie me a lift doon wi' thae barrels cannily. For that dour old tod, the laird, is to ken naething aboot this. Only Miss Peggy and Maister William, they ken. 'Deed, it was young William himsel' that sent me on this errand."

So with that the mannie gave a kind of laugh, and helped me down with the ankers far better than I could have expected. We rolled them into a shed at the back of the stables, and covered them up snug with some straw and some old heather thatching.

"Ay, my lad," says I to him, "for a' your douce speech and fair words I can see that ye hae been at this job afore!"

"Well, it is true," he said, "that I hae rolled a barrel or two in my time."

Then, in the waft of an eye I knew who he was. I set him down for Muckle Jock, the Excise officer, that had never gone to the Glasserton at all, but had been lurking there in the moss, waiting to deceive honest men. I knew that I needed to be wary with him, for he was, as I had heard, a sturdy carl, and had won the last throw at the Stoneykirk wrestling. But all the men of the Fellside have an excellent opinion of themselves, and I thought I was good for any man of the size of this one.

So said I to him: "Noo, chiel, ye ken we are no' juist carryin' barrels o' spring water at this time o' nicht to pleasure King George. Hearken ye: we are in danger of being laid by the heels in the jail of Wigton gin the black lawyer corbies get us. Noo, there's a Preventive man that is crawling and spying ower by on the heights o' Physgill. Ye maun e'en come wi' me an' help to keep him oot o' hairm's way. For it wad not be for his guid that he should gang doon to the port this nicht!"

The man that I took to be the gauger hummed and hawed a while, till I had enough of his talk and unstable ways.

"No back-and-forrit ways wi' Robin," said I. "Will ye come and help to catch the King's officer, or will ye not?"

"No' a foot will I go," says he. "I have been a King's officer, myself!"

Whereupon I laid a pistol to his ear, for I was in some heat.

"Gin you war King Geordie himsel', aye, or Cumberland either, ye shall come

wi' me and help to catch the gauger," said I.

For I bethought me that it would be a bonny ploy, and one long to be talked about in these parts, thus to lay by the heels the Exciseman and make him tramp to Glasserton to kidnap himself.

The man with the bandy legs was taking a while to consider, so I said to him: "She is a guid pistol and new primed!"

"I'll come wi' ye!" said he.

So I set him first on the road, and left my horse in the stables of Myrtoun. It was the gloam of the morning when we got to the turn of the path by which, if he were to come at all, the new gauger would ride from Glasserton. And lo! as if we had set a tryst, there he was coming over the heathery braes at a brisk trot. So I covered him with my pistol, and took his horse by the reins, thinking no more of the other man I had taken for the gauger before.

"Dismount, my lad," I said. "Ye dinna ken me, but I ken you. Come here, my brisk landlouper, and help to haud him!"

I saw the stranger who had come with me sneaking off, but with my other pistol I brought him to a stand. So together we got the gauger into a little thicket or planting. And here, willing or unwilling, we kept him all day, till we were sure that the stuff would all be run, and the long trains of honest smugglers on good horses far on their way to the towns of the north.

Then very conscientiously I counted out the half of the tale of golden guineas Master William had given me, and put them into the pocket of the gauger's coat.

"Gin ye are a good, still-tongued kind of cattle, there is more of that kind of yellow oats where these came from," said I. "But lie ye here snug as a paitrick for an hour yet by the clock, lest even yet ye should come to harm!"

So there we left him, not very sorely angered, for all he had posed as so efficient and zealous a King's officer.

"Now," said I to the man that had helped me, "I promised ye half o' Maister William's guineas, that he bade me keep, for I allow that it micht hae been a different job but for your help. And here they are. Ye shall never say that Robin of Airyolan roguit ony man—even a feckless toon's birkie wi' bandy legs!"

The man laughed and took the siller, saying, "Thank'ee!" with an arrogant air as if he handled bags of them every day. But, nevertheless, he took them, and I parted from him, wishing him well, which was more than he did to me. But I know how to use civility upon occasion.

When I reached home I told my father, and described the man I had met. But he could make no guess at him. Nor had I any myself till the next rent day, when my father, having a lame leg where the colt had kicked him, sent me down to pay the owing. The factor I knew well, but I had my money in hand and little I cared for him. But what was my astonishment to find, sitting at the table with him, the very same man who had helped me to lay the Exciseman by the heels. But now, I thought, there was a strangely different air about him.

And what astonished me more, it was this man, and not the factor, who spoke first to me.

"Aye, young Robin of Airyolan, and

are you here? Ye are a chiel with birr and smeddum! There are the bones of a man in ye! Hae ye settled with the gauger for shackling him by the hill of Physgill?"

Now, as I have said, I thole snash from no man, and I gave him the word back sharply.

"Hae ye settled wi' him yoursel', sir? For it was you that tied the tow rope!"

My adversary laughed, and looked not at all ill-pleased.

He pointed to the five gold Georges on the tables.

"Hark ye, Robin of Airyolan, these are the five guineas ye gied to me like an honest man. I'll forgie ye for layin' the pistol to my lug, for after all ye are some credit to the land that fed ye. Gin ye promise to wed a decent lass, I'll e'en gie ye a farm o' your ain. And as sure as my name is Sir William Maxwell, ye shall sit your lifetime rent free, for the de'il's errand that ye took me on the nicht of the brandy-running at the Clone."

I could have sunken through the floor when I heard that it was Sir William himself—whom, because he had so recently returned from foreign parts after a sojourn of many years, I had never before seen.

Then both the factor and the laird laughed heartily at my discomfiture.

"Ken ye o' ony lass that wad tak' up wi' ye, Robin?" said Sir William.

"Half a dozen o' them, my lord," said I. "Lassies are neither ill to seek nor hard to find when Robin of Airyolan gangs a-cortin'!"

"Losh preserve us!" cried the laird, slapping his thigh, "but I mysel' never sallied forth to woo a lass so blithely confident!"

I said nothing, but dusted my knee-breeks. For the laird was no very good-looking man, being gray as a badger.

"An' mind ye maun see to it that the bairns are a' loons, and as staunch and stark as yoursel'!" said the factor.

"A man can but do his best," answered I, very modestly as I thought. For I never can tell why it is that the folk will always say that I have a good opinion of myself. But neither, on the other hand, can I tell why I should not.

Kiss of Death

The sea was running high and was black as night. Only the crests of the endless waves glistened in the lightning that flashed across the heavens. The storm was raging toward the land and threw the ships upon the rocks, so that hundreds of human lives perished in the ocean. Then of a sudden it seemed as though the storm grew entangled among the cliffs on the shore, and condensed into a form that reared up tall and pale against the mighty heavens. It was a grave youth with unflinching black eyes, who leaned upon a sickle and held an hour-glass in his hand. He gazed across the waters with an indifferent air, as though the wrecks and corpses beneath concerned him as little as the sand in his glass, which trickled down evenly, steadily, regardless of the blustering of the storm, or the sudden quiet. There was something iron-like in the youth's

features; in his eyes there lay a power that destroyed all things they looked upon; even the ocean seemed to be numbed by them, to grow silent with fear. Day dawned, and, flooded with roseate hues from the rising sun, Sorrow came stepping over the cliffs. She stretched out her arms to the youth.

"Brother," she cried, "brother, what have you done. You have raged terribly, and did not hear how I called you; ay, cried for you so eagerly."

"I heard nothing," said Death. "I felt myself too quiet, so I roused myself. A few vessels were lost in the act."

"Oh, pitiless one!" said Sorrow.

"I do not comprehend your grief," answered the sombre youth; and turning from her, he walked away. He paced silently through the sunny world; it blew chill around him, and wherever he paused a silent shudder seized all things. He went by a house and looked in. There lay a man tortured with pain who beheld him and called him imploringly; but he only shook his head and went farther. A lovely young woman stood in her garden surrounded by joyous children; her husband had just stepped up to her and kissed her. The pale wanderer laid his hand on her shoulder and beckoned to her; she followed him a few steps and sank lifeless to the ground.

Then he came to a forest in which a pale man was pacing hither and thither, tearing his hair and gnashing his teeth, crying:

"Dishonored! dishonored!"

He saw the passer-by with the sombre eyes, saw him lift his white hand and point to a tree. The despairing man understood the signal.

He passed a group of playing children, and softly mowed the grass between their feet with his scythe. Then they bowed their heads like broken flowerets.

There an old man sat in an arm-chair, and was enjoying the warming sunbeams. Death raised his hour-glass and held it before his eyes—the last sands were running down.

He halted by a stagnant pool. No water could be seen, for it was covered with green. The rushes quivered under his cold breath, and the toad that had been croaking grew silent. Then the reeds rustled and a lovely woman drew close to the water, took something from a handkerchief and threw it down. It sank, with a faint gurgle, into the depths. Twice she made a movement as though she would spring in after it, but each time Death extended his scythe toward her, and she fled, terrified. He lifted his hour-glass, in which the sand ran down quickly, hurriedly. Then something white came up between the green water-plants, and, with wide-open eyes, a little corpse appeared, gazing at the running sand.

Then Death went farther, and across a battle-field, where he mowed down many fine men.

At last he came to a lovely valley in which autumn was reigning in all its glory. The trees were bathed in gleaming gold, the sward beneath was a luscious green, strewn with tender flowers. A silvery laugh came from the branches, through which a charming little figure was floating, now hiding among the leaves, now jumping down upon the grass, and at last running with lightsome step, and garments streaming in the breeze, to meet a stately man who stood leaning on a club beside a hillock.

"Come to me, fair Happiness," he cried aloud. "You must go with me. You are mine, for I am Courage."

"Must I?" said the sweet little form, and turned her back to him.

As she did so, her eyes, full of beaming wantonness and measureless roguery, turned toward the pale pilgrim. He saw the dimples that played on her chin and cheeks, her neck, and her arms. Her whole slender figure was inwrapt by her light, floating locks which were moved by the softest breeze, and which looked in the sunshine like falling gold-dust.

"Yes," cried Courage, "you must, for you love me. I have found that out."

"I love you in this fair valley, and that is why I give you smiles; but if you must go out into the world, you must go alone. There stands one who has never yet spoken with me, and he looks as if he, too, needed the gift of smiling."

"You can't give it to him," said Courage. "Do not try. You will only hurt yourself with his scythe."

But Happiness had already run up to the Inexorable.

"Shall I teach you how to smile, you serious youth? You seem to need it."

"Yes, I could use it, for all behold me unwillingly, and no one goes with me unless he is obliged, and it is because I cannot smile."

"Yes," said Happiness, and she grew quite timid; "but in order to teach you smiling, I must kiss you. That does not seem to me so hard, only your eyes terrify me."

"Then I will close them," said Death.

"No, no, you are so pale, I shall be still more afraid; and your scythe, too, is so sharp and cold."

"Then I will throw it from me."

And he threw his scythe far away; it grazed the trees as it fell. Then their golden foliage fell to the earth, and all the branches grew bare, and as the scythe sank into the grass it grew covered with rime, and the flowers hung down their crowns.

"Oh, you have spoilt my garden with your ugly scythe," cried Happiness; "and I was going to make you such a lovely present."

"I did not want to do it, but the scythe flew out of my hand, and now I am much sadder because I have grieved you. You can find new gardens, but no one can teach me how to smile."

"You shall learn, notwithstanding," said the fair maiden, and she stepped close to him; but as often as her rosy lips approached him she grew so cold that she fell back shuddering. Then he looked at her imploringly without raising his hand, as if he feared to hurt her by a touch; but his gaze held her spell-bound like a great power, and she had to kiss him. But at the moment that her lips touched him his cold sank deep into her heart, and she fell dead to earth. Courage sprang angrily at the pale youth.

"You have murdered my Happiness."

"Was she yours?" asked Death, and sighed; "then go after her; there she floats."

Following the indication of his hand, Courage saw how the soft breezes were tenderly bearing away Happiness upon their wings, like to a light cloudlet. Courage hurried after them with powerful steps, keeping his eye ever fixed on that rosy cloud.

Death stood and gazed until he felt quite warm within, and a tear ran slowly

down his pale cheeks. He had to learn for himself, what as yet he knew not, how it hurts if we chase away Happiness.

When nothing more could be seen but bare trees, faded grass, and withered flowers, he lifted his scythe and looked sadly around the valley, as though he expected it would all bloom again. But the earth remained dead and stark, so he turned once more to the sea. That was rolling its eternal tides upward and downward, as indifferent as ever. But he who stood above and looked down was no longer indifferent. He thought of the maiden whom he had hurt, and his yearning was as great as the ocean at his feet. And this yearning transfigured him to wondrous beauty. Thus he was seen of a pale maiden with unkempt hair and torn garments. She fell at his feet; but he was terrified by her, and drew back a pace.

"Do you no longer know me?" said the maiden. "You used to know me well, and you knew that I perished for yearning after you. I am Despair. Have you forgotten that you promised to kiss me, to give me one single kiss? It would be happiness forever."

The youth's eyes grew dark as night, and his voice sounded stern as he said:

"And you dare to speak of happiness? Do you know what happiness is? If you come near it only once may you be turned to stone!"

"And if I were to turn to stone, yet I implore for a kiss from your mouth."

The youth shuddered and thought of the lips that had touched his and taught him to smile, and as he thought of them he smiled. When the maiden at his feet saw this, she threw her arms about his neck, and laid her head upon his breast. She did not see the hate and loathing that flashed from his eyes, but the next moment a hideous skeleton grinned at her, and nearly crushed her in his bony arms, and a death's-head kissed her.

Then the earth trembled and opened. Cities vanished, fire streamed forth from mountains, forests were uprooted, rocks flew through the air, the sky was on fire, and the sea rolled in upon the land. When all was still again, Despair reared above the waters, an image of stone—Death rushed away as a storm-wind, to pursue the rosy cloud under this disguise.

The False Venus

My friend, the doctor, was a thorough antiquary—a little rusty, musty old fellow, always groping among ruins. He relished a building as you Englishmen relish a cheese—the more moldy and crumbling it was, the more it suited his taste. A shell of an old nameless temple, or the cracked walls of a broken-down amphitheater, would throw him into raptures, and he took more delight in these crusts and cheese-parings of antiquity than in the best-conditioned modern palaces.

He was a curious collector of coins also, and had just gained an accession of wealth that almost turned his brain. He had picked up, for instance, several Roman Consulars, half a Roman As, two

Punics, which had doubtless belonged to the soldiers of Hannibal, having been found on the very spot where they had encamped among the Apennines. He had, moreover, one Samnite, struck after the Social War, and a Philistis, a queen that never existed; but above all, he valued himself upon a coin, indescribable to any but the initiated in these matters, bearing a cross on one side, and a pegasus on the other, and which, by some antiquarian logic, the little man adduced as an historical document illustrating the progress of Christianity.

All these precious coins he carried about him in a leathern purse, buried deep in a pocket of his little black breeches.

The last maggot he had taken into his brain was to hunt after the ancient cities of the Pelasgi, which are said to exist to this day among the mountains of the Abruzzi, but about which a singular degree of obscurity prevails. He had made many discoveries concerning them, and had recorded a great many valuable notes and memorandums on the subject, in a voluminous book which he always carried about with him, either for the purpose of frequent reference, or through fear lest the precious document should fall into the hands of brother antiquaries. He had, therefore, a large pocket in the skirt of his coat, where he bore about his inestimable tome, banging against his rear as he walked.

Thus heavily laden with the spoils of antiquity, the good little man, during a sojourn at Terracina, mounted one day the rocky cliffs which overhang the town, to visit the castle of Theodoric. He was groping about the ruins, towards the hour of sunset, buried in his reflections, his wits no doubt woolgathering among the Goths and Romans, when he heard footsteps behind him.

He turned, and beheld five or six young fellows, of rough, saucy demeanor, clad in a singular manner, half peasant, half huntsman, with carbines in their hands. Their whole appearance and carriage left him no doubt into what company he had fallen.

The doctor was a feeble little man, poor in look, and poorer in purse. He had but little gold or silver to be robbed of, but then he had his curious ancient coin in his breeches pocket. He had, moreover, certain other valuables, such as an old silver watch, thick as a turnip, with figures on it large enough for a clock, and a set of seals at the end of a steel chain, dangling half way down to his knees. All these were of precious esteem, being family relics. He had also a seal ring, a veritable antique intaglio, that covered half his knuckles. It was a Venus, which the old man almost worshiped with the zeal of a voluptuary. But what he most valued was his inestimable collection of hints relative to the Pelasgian cities, which he would gladly have given all the money in his pocket to have had safe at the bottom of his trunk in Terracina.

However, he plucked up a stout heart, at least as stout a heart as he could, seeing that he was but a puny little man at the best of times. So he wished the hunters a "*buon giorno*." They returned his salutation, giving the old gentleman a sociable slap on the back that made his heart leap into his throat.

They fell into conversation, and walked for some time together among the heights, the doctor wishing them all the while at the bottom of the crater of Vesuvius. At length they came to a

small osteria on the mountain, where they proposed to enter and have a cup of wine together. The doctor consented, though he would as soon have been invited to drink hemlock.

One of the gang remained sentinel at the door; the others swaggered into the house, stood their guns in the corner of the room, and each drawing a pistol or stiletto out of his belt, laid it upon the table. They now drew benches round the board, called lustily for wine, and hailing the doctor as though he had been a boon companion of long standing, insisted upon his sitting down and making merry.

The worthy man complied with forced grimace, but with fear and trembling, sitting uneasily on the edge of his chair, eying ruefully the black-muzzled pistols and cold, naked stilettos, and supping down heartburn with every drop of liquor. His new comrades, however, pushed the bottle bravely, and plied him vigorously. They sang, they laughed, told excellent stories of their robberies and combats, mingled with many ruffian jokes, and the little doctor was fain to augh at all their cutthroat pleasantries, though his heart was dying away at the very bottom of his bosom.

By their own account, they were young men from the villages, who had recently taken up this line of life out of the wild caprice of youth. They talked of their murderous exploits as a sportsman talks of his amusements; to shoot down a traveler seemed of little more consequence to them than to shoot a hare. They spoke with rapture of the glorious roving life they led,—free as birds, here today, gone tomorrow, ranging the forests, climbing the rocks, scouring the valleys, the world their own wherever they could lay hold of it, full purses, merry companions, pretty women. The little antiquary got fuddled with their talk and their wine, for they did not spare bumpers. He half forgot his fears, his seal ring, and his family watch; even the treatise on the Pelasgian cities, which was warming under him, for a time faded from his memory in the glowing picture that they drew. He declares that he no longer wonders at the prevalence of this robber mania among the mountains, for he felt at the time that, had he been a young man and a strong man, and had there been no danger of the galleys in the background, he should have been half tempted himself to turn bandit.

At length the hour of separating arrived. The doctor was suddenly called to himself and his fears by seeing the robbers resume their weapons. He now quaked for his valuables, and, above all, for his antiquarian treatise. He endeavored, however, to look cool and unconcerned, and drew from out his deep pocket a long, lank, leathern purse, far gone into consumption, at the bottom of which a few coins chinked with the trembling of his hand.

The chief of the party observed his movement, and laying his hand upon the antiquary's shoulder, "Harkee! Signor Dottore!" said he, "we have drunk together as friends and comrades; let us part as such. We understand you. We know who and what you are, for we know who everybody is that sleeps at Terracina, or that puts foot upon the road. You are a rich man, but you carry all your wealth in your head. We cannot get at it, and we should not know what to do with it if we could. I see you are uneasy about

your ring; but don't worry yourself, it is not worth taking. You think it an antique, but it's a counterfeit—a mere sham."

Here the ire of the antiquary rose; the doctor forgot himself in his zeal for the character of his ring. Heaven and earth! his Venus a sham? Had they pronounced the wife of his bosom "no better than she should be," he could not have been more indignant. He fired up in vindication of his intaglio.

"Nay, nay," continued the robber, "we have no time to dispute about it; value it as you please. Come, you're a brave little old signor. One more cup of wine, and we'll pay the reckoning. No compliments; you shall not pay a grain; you are our guest. I insist upon it. So now make the best of your way back to Terracina; it's growing late. Buon viaggio! And harkee, take care how you wander among these mountains; you may not always fall into such good company."

They shouldered their guns, sprang gayly up the rocks, and the little doctor hobbled back to Terracina, rejoicing that the robbers had left his watch, his coins, and his treatise unmolested, but still indignant that they should have pronounced his Venus an impostor.

The Shot

CHAPTER I

THE CIVILIAN

We were stationed in the little town of N——. The life of an officer in the army is well known. In the morning, drill and the riding-school; dinner with the Colonel or at a Jewish restaurant; in the evening, punch and cards. In N—— there was not one open house, not a single marriageable girl. We used to meet in each other's rooms, where, except our uniforms, we never saw anything.

One civilian only was admitted into our society. He was about thirty-five years of age, and therefore we looked upon him as an old fellow. His experience gave him great advantage over us, and his habitual taciturnity, stern disposition and caustic tongue produced a deep impression upon our young minds. Some mystery surrounded his existence; he had the appearance of a Russian, although his name was a foreign one. He had formerly served in the Hussars, and with distinction. Nobody knew the cause that had induced him to retire from the service and settle in a wretched little village, where he lived poorly and, at the same time, extravagantly. He always went on foot, and constantly wore a shabby black overcoat, but the officers of our regiment were ever welcome at his table. His dinners, it is true, never consisted of more than two or three dishes, prepared by a retired soldier, but the champagne flowed like water. Nobody knew what his circumstances were, or what his income was, and nobody dared to question him about them. He had a collection of books, consisting chiefly of works on military matters and a few novels. He willingly lent them to us to read, and never asked

for them back; on the other hand, he never returned to the owner the books that were lent to him. His principal amusement was shooting with a pistol. The walls of his room were riddled with bullets, and were as full of holes as a honey-comb. A rich collection of pistols was the only luxury in the humble cottage where he lived. The skill which he had acquired with his favorite weapon was simply incredible; and if he had offered to shoot a pear off somebody's forage-cap, not a man in our regiment would have hesitated to place the object upon his head.

Our conversation often turned upon duels. Silvio—so I will call him—never joined in it. When asked if he had ever fought, he drily replied that he had; but he entered into no particulars, and it was evident that such questions were not to his liking. We came to the conclusion that he had upon his conscience the memory of some unhappy victim of his terrible skill. Moreover, it never entered into the head of any of us to suspect him of anything like cowardice. There are persons whose mere look is sufficient to repel such a suspicion. But an unexpected incident occurred which astounded us all.

One day, about ten of our officers dined with Silvio. They drank as usual, that is to say, a great deal. After dinner we asked our host to hold the bank for a game at faro. For a long time he refused, for he hardly ever played, but at last he ordered cards to be brought, placed half a hundred ducats upon the table, and sat down to deal. We took our places round him, and the play began. It was Silvio's custom to preserve a complete silence when playing. He never disputed, and never entered into explanations. If the punter made a mistake in calculating, he immediately paid him the difference or noted down the surplus. We were acquainted with this habit of his, and we always allowed him to have his own way; but among us on this occasion was an officer who had only recently been transferred to our regiment. During the course of the game, this officer absently scored one point too many. Silvio took the chalk and noted down the correct account to his usual custom. The officer, thinking that he had made a mistake, began to enter into explanations. Silvio continued dealing in silence. The officer, losing patience, took the brush and rubbed out what he considered was wrong. Silvio took the chalk and corrected the score again. The officer, heated with wine, play, and the laughter of his comrades, considered himself grossly insulted, and in his rage he seized a brass candlestick from the table, and hurled it at Silvio, who barely succeeded in avoiding the missile. We were filled with consternation. Silvio rose, white with rage, and with gleaming eyes, said:

"My dear sir, have the goodness to withdraw, and thank God that this has happened in my house."

None of us entertained the slightest doubt as to what the result would be, and we already looked upon our new comrade as a dead man. The officer withdrew, saying that he was ready to answer for his offence in whatever way the banker liked. The play went on for a few minutes longer, but feeling that our host was no longer interested in the game, we withdrew one after the other, and repaired to our respective quarters, after having exchanged a few words

upon the probability of there soon being a vacancy in the regiment.

The next day, at the riding-school, we were already asking each other if the poor lieutenant was still alive, when he himself appeared among us. We put the same question to him, and he replied that he had not yet heard from Silvio. This astonished us. We went to Silvio's house and found him in the courtyard shooting bullet after bullet into an ace pasted upon the gate. He received us as usual, but did not utter a word about the event of the previous evening. Three days passed, and the lieutenant was still alive. We asked each other in astonishment: "Can it be possible that Silvio is not going to fight?"

Silvio did not fight. He was satisfied with a very lame explanation, and became reconciled to his assailant.

This lowered him very much in the opinion of all our young fellows. Want of courage is the last thing to be pardoned by young men, who usually look upon bravery as the chief of all human virtues, and the excuse for every possible fault. But, by degrees, everything became forgotten, and Silvio regained his former influence.

I alone could not approach him on the old footing. Being endowed by nature with a romantic imagination, I had become attached more than all the others to the man whose life was an enigma, and who seemed to me the hero of some mysterious drama. He was fond of me; at least, with me alone did he drop his customary sarcastic tone, and converse on different subjects in a simple and unusually agreeable manner. But after this unlucky evening, the thought that his honor had been tarnished, and that the stain had been allowed to remain upon it in accordance with his own wish, was ever present in my mind, and prevented me treating him as before. I was ashamed to look at him. Silvio was too intelligent and experienced not to observe this and guess the cause of it. This seemed to vex him; at least I observed once or twice a desire on his part to enter into an explanation with me, but I avoided such opportunities, and Silvio gave up the attempt. From that time forward I saw him only in the presence of my comrades, and our confidential conversations came to an end.

The inhabitants of the capital, with minds occupied by so many matters of business and pleasure, have no idea of the many sensations so familiar to the inhabitants of villages and small towns, as for instance, the awaiting the arrival of the post. On Tuesdays and Fridays our regimental bureau used to be filled with officers: some expecting money, some letters, and others newspapers. The packets were usually opened on the spot, items of news were communicated from one to another, and the bureau used to present a very animated picture. Silvio used to have his letters addressed to our regiment, and he was generally there to receive them.

One day he received a letter, the seal of which he broke with a look of great impatience. As he read the contents, his eyes sparkled. The officers, each occupied with his own letters, did not observe anything.

"Gentlemen," said Silvia, "circumstances demand my immediate departure; I leave tonight. I hope that you will not refuse to dine with me for the last time. I shall expect you, too"

he added, turning towards me. "I shall expect you without fail."

With these words he hastily departed, and we, after agreeing to meet at Silvio's, dispersed to our various quarters.

I arrived at Silvio's house at the appointed time, and found nearly the whole regiment there. All his things were already packed; nothing remained but the bare, bullet-riddled walls. We sat down to table. Our host was in an excellent humor, and his gaiety was quickly communicated to the rest. Corks popped every moment, glasses foamed incessantly, and, with the utmost warmth, we wished our departing friend a pleasant journey and every happiness. When we rose from the table it was already late in the evening. After having wished everybody good-bye, Silvio took me by the hand and detained me just at the moment when I was preparing to depart.

"I want to speak to you," he said in a low voice.

I stopped behind.

The guests had departed, and we two were left alone. Sitting down opposite each other, we silently lit our pipes. Silvio seemed greatly troubled; not a trace remained of his former convulsive gaiety. The intense pallor of his face, his sparkling eyes, and the thick smoke issuing from his mouth, gave him a truly diabolical appearance. Several minutes elapsed, and then Silvio broke the silence.

"Perhaps we shall never see each other again," said he; "before we part, I should like to have an explanation with you. You may have observed that I care very little for the opinion of other people, but I like you, and I feel that it would be painful to me to leave you with a wrong impression upon your mind."

He paused, and began to knock the ashes out of his pipe. I sat gazing silently at the ground.

"You thought it strange," he continued, "that I did not demand satisfaction from that drunken idiot R——. You will admit, however, that having the choice of weapons, his life was in my hands, while my own was in no great danger. I could ascribe my forbearance to generosity alone, but I will not tell a lie. If I could have chastised R—— without the least risk to my own life, I should never have pardoned him."

I looked at Silvio with astonishment. Such a confession completely astounded me. Silvio continued:

"Exactly so: I have no right to expose myself to death. Six years ago I received a slap in the face, and my enemy still lives."

My curiosity was greatly excited.

"Did you not fight with him?" I asked. "Circumstances probably separated you."

"I did fight with him," replied Silvio; "and here is a souvenir of our duel."

Silvio rose and took from a cardboard box a red cap with a gold tassel and embroidery (what the French call a *bonnet de police*); he put it on—a bullet had passed through it about an inch above the forehead.

"You know," continued Silvio, "that I served in one of the Hussar regiments. My character is well-known to you: I am accustomed to taking the lead. From my youth this has been my passion. In our time dissoluteness was the fashion, and I was the most outrageous man in the army. We used to boast of our

drunkenness: I beat in a drinking bout the famous Bourtsoff, of whom Denis Davidoff has sung. Duels in our regiment were constantly taking place, and in all of them I was either second or principal. My comrades adored me, while the regimental commanders, who were constantly being changed, looked upon me as a necessary evil.

"I was calmly enjoying my reputation, when a young man belonging to a wealthy and distinguished family—I will not mention his name—joined our regiment. Never in my life have I met with such a fortunate fellow! Imagine to yourself youth, wit, beauty, unbounded gaiety, the most reckless bravery, a famous name, untold wealth —imagine all these, and you can form some idea of the effect that he would be sure to produce among us. My supremacy was shaken. Dazzled by my reputation, he began to seek my friendship, but I received him coldly, and without the least regret he held aloof from me. I took a hatred to him. His success in the regiment and in the society of ladies brought me to the verge of despair. I began to seek a quarrel with him; to my epigrams he replied with epigrams which always seemed to me more spontaneous and more cutting than mine, and which were decidedly more amusing, for he joked while I fumed. At last, at a ball given by a Polish landed proprietor, seeing him the object of the attention of all the ladies, and especially of the mistress of the house, with whom I was upon very good terms, I whispered some grossly insulting remark in his ear. He flamed up and gave me a slap in the face. We grasped our swords; the ladies fainted; we were separated; and that same night we set out to fight.

"The dawn was just breaking. I was standing at the appointed place with my three seconds. With inexplicable impatience I waited my opponent. The spring sun rose, and it was already growing hot. I saw him coming in the distance. He was walking on foot, accompanied by one second. We advanced to meet him. He approached, holding his cap filled with black cherries. The seconds measured twelve paces for us. I had to fire first, but my agitation was so great, that I could not depend upon the steadiness of my hand; and in order to give myself time to become calm, I ceded to him the first shot. My adversary would not agree to this. It was decided that we should cast lots. The first number fell to him, the constant favorite of fortune. He took aim, and his bullet went through my cap. It was now my turn. His life at last was in my hands; I looked at him eagerly, endeavoring to detect if only the faintest shadow of uneasiness. But he stood in front of my pistol, picking out the ripest cherries from his cap and spitting out the stones, which flew almost as far as my feet. His indifference annoyed me beyond measure. 'What is the use,' thought I, 'of depriving him of life, when he attaches no value whatever to it?' A malicious thought flashed through my mind. I lowered my pistol.

"'You don't seem to be ready for death just at present,' I said to him: 'you wish to have your breakfast; I do not wish to hinder you.'

"'You are not hindering me in the least,' replied he. 'Have the goodness to fire, or just as you please—the shot

remains yours; I shall always be ready at your service.'

"I turned to the seconds, informing them that I had no intention of firing that day, and with that the duel came to an end.

"I resigned my commission and retired to this little place. Since then, not a day has passed that I have not thought of revenge. And now my hour has arrived."

Silvio took from his pocket the letter that he had received that morning, and gave it to me to read. Someone (it seemed to be his business agent) wrote to him from Moscow, that a *certain person* was going to be married to a young and beautiful girl.

"You can guess," said Silvio, "who the certain person is. I am going to Moscow. We shall see if he will look death in the face with as much indifference now, when he is on the eve of being married, as he did once with his cherries!"

With these words, Silvio rose, threw his cap upon the floor, and began pacing up and down the room like a tiger in his cage. I had listened to him in silence; strange conflicting feelings agitated me.

The servant entered and announced that the horses were ready. Silvio grasped my hand tightly, and we embraced each other. He seated himself in his *telega*, in which lay two trunks, one containing his pistols, the other his effects. We said good-bye once more, and the horses galloped off.

CHAPTER II

ALL IN JOKE

Several years passed, and family circumstances compelled me to settle in the poor little village of M——. Occupied with agricultural pursuits I ceased not to sigh in secret for my former noisy and careless life. The most difficult thing of all was having to accustom myself to passing the spring and winter evenings in perfect solitude. Until the hour for dinner I managed to pass away the time somehow or other, talking with the bailiff, riding about to inspect the work, or going round to look at the new buildings; but as soon as it began to get dark, I positively did not know what to do with myself. The few books that I had found in the cupboards and storerooms, I already knew by heart. All the stories that my housekeeper Kirilovna could remember, I had heard over and over again. The songs of the peasant women made me feel depressed. I tried drinking spirits, but it made my head ache; and moreover, I confess I was afraid of becoming a drunkard from mere chagrin, that is to say, the saddest kind of drunkard, of which I had seen many examples in our district.

I had no near neighbors, except two or three topers, whose conversation consisted for the most part of hiccups and sighs. Solitude was preferable to their society. At last I decided to go to bed as early as possible, and to dine as late as possible; in this way I shortened the evening and lengthened out the day, and I found that the plan answered very well.

Four versts from my house was a rich estate belonging to the Countess B——; but nobody lived there except the steward. The Countess had only visited her estate once in the first year of her married life, and then she had remained there no longer than a month. But in the second spring of my hermit-

ical life, a report was circulated that the Countess, with her husband, was coming to spend the summer on her estate. The report turned out to be true, for they arrived at the beginning of June.

The arrival of a rich neighbor is an important event in the lives of country people. The landed proprietors and the people of their household talk about it for two months beforehand, and for three years afterwards. As for me, I must confess that the news of the arrival of a young and beautiful neighbor affected me strongly. I burned with impatience to see her, and the first Sunday after her arrival I set out after dinner for the village of A——, to pay my respects to the Countess and her husband, as their nearest neighbor and most humble servant.

A lackey conducted me into the Count's study, and then went to announce me. The spacious apartment was furnished with every possible luxury. Around the walls were cases filled with books and surmounted by bronze busts; over the marble mantlepiece was a large mirror; on the floor was a green cloth covered with carpets. Unaccustomed to luxury in my own poor corner, and not having seen the wealth of other people for a long time, I waited the appearance of the Count with some little trepidation, as a suppliant from the provinces awaits the arrival of the minister. The door opened, and a handsome-looking man, of about thirty-two years of age, entered the room. The Count approached me with a frank and friendly air: I endeavored to be self-possessed and began to introduce myself, but he anticipated me. We sat down. His conversation, which was easy and agreeable, soon dissipated my awkward bashfulness; and I was already beginning to recover my usual composure, when the Countess suddenly entered, and I became more confused than ever. She was indeed beautiful. The Count presented me. I wished to appear at ease, but the more I tried to assume an air of unconstraint, the more awkward I felt. They, in order to give me time to recover myself and to become accustomed to my new acquaintances, began to talk to each other, treating me as a good neighbor, and without ceremony. Meanwhile I walked about the room, examining the books and pictures. I am no judge of pictures, but one of them attracted my attention. It represented some view in Switzerland, but it was not the painting that struck me, but the circumstance that the canvas was shot through by two bullets, one planted just above the other.

"A good shot, that!" said I turning to the Count.

"Yes," replied he, "a very remarkable shot. . . . Do you shoot well?" he continued.

"Tolerably," replied I, rejoicing that the conversation had turned at last upon a subject that was familiar to me. "At thirty paces I can manage to hit a card without fail.—I mean, of course, with a pistol that I am used to."

"Really?" said the Countess, with a look of the greatest interest. "And you, my dear, could you hit a card at thirty paces?"

"Some day," replied the Count, "we will try. In my time I did not shoot badly, but it is now four years since I touched a pistol."

"Oh!" I observed, "in that case, I

don't mind laying a wager that Your Excellency will not hit the card at twenty paces: the pistol demands practice every day. I know that from experience. In our regiment I was reckoned one of the best shots. It once happened that I did not touch a pistol for a whole month, as I had sent mine to be mended; and would you believe it, Your Excellency, the first time I began to shoot again, I missed a bottle four times in succession at twenty paces! Our captain, a witty and amusing fellow, happened to be standing by, and he said to me: 'It is evident, my friend, that your hand will not lift itself against the bottle.' No, Your Excellency, you must not neglect to practise, or your hand will soon lose its cunning. The best shot that I ever met used to shoot at least three times every day before dinner. It was as much his custom to do this, as it was to drink his daily glass of brandy."

The Count and Countess seemed pleased that I had begun to talk.

"And what sort of a shot was he?" asked the Count.

"Well, it was this way with him, Your Excellency: if he saw a fly settle on the wall—you smile, Countess, but, before Heaven, it is the truth. If he saw a fly, he would call out: 'Kouzka, my pistol!' Kouzka would bring him a loaded pistol—bang! and the fly would be crushed against the wall."

"Wonderful!" said the Count. "And what was his name?"

"Silvio, Your Excellency."

"Silvio!" exclaimed the Count, starting up. "Did you know Silvio?"

"How could I help knowing him, Your Excellency: we were intimate friends; he was received in our regiment like a brother officer, but it is now five years since I had any tidings of him. Then Your Excellency also knew him?"

"Oh, yes, I knew him very well. Did he ever tell you of one very strange incident in his life?"

"Does Your Excellency refer to the slap in the face that he received from some blackguard at a ball?"

"Did he tell you the name of this blackguard?"

"No, Your Excellency, he never mentioned his name. . . . Ah! Your Excellency!" I continued, guessing the truth; "pardon me . . . I did not know . . . could it really have been you?"

"Yes, I myself," replied the Count, with a look of extraordinary agitation; "and that bullet-pierced picture is a memento of our last meeting."

"Ah, my dear," said the Countess, "for Heaven's sake, do not speak about that; it would be too terrible for me to listen to."

"No," replied the Count: "I will relate everything. He knows how I insulted his friend, and it is only right that he should know how Silvio revenged himself."

The Count pushed a chair towards me, and with the liveliest interest I listened to the following story:

"Five years ago I got married. The first month—the honeymoon—I spent here, in this village. To this house I am indebted for the happiest moments of my life, as well as for one of its most painful recollections.

"One evening we went out together for a ride on horseback. My wife's horse became restive; she grew fright-

ened, gave the reins to me, and returned home on foot. I rode on before. In the courtyard I saw a traveling carriage, and I was told that in my study sat waiting for me a man, who would not give his name, but who merely said that he had business with me. I entered the room and saw in the darkness a man, covered with dust and wearing a beard of several days' growth. He was standing there, near the fireplace. I approached him, trying to remember his features.

" 'You do not recognize me, Count?' said he, in a quivering voice.

" 'Silvio!' I cried, and I confess that I felt as if my hair had suddenly stood on end.

" 'Exactly,' continued he. 'There is a shot due to me, and I have come to discharge my pistol. Are you ready?'

"His pistol protruded from a side pocket. I measured twelve paces and took my stand there in that corner, begging him to fire quickly, before my wife arrived. He hesitated, and asked for a light. Candles were brought in. I closed the doors, gave orders that nobody was to enter, and again begged him to fire. He drew out his pistol and took aim. . . . I counted the seconds . . . I thought of her . . . A terrible minute passed! Silvio lowered his hand.

" 'I regret,' said he, 'that the pistol is not loaded with cherry-stones . . . the bullet is heavy. It seems to me that this is not a duel, but a murder. I am not accustomed to taking aim at unarmed men. Let us begin all over again; we will cast lots as to who shall fire first.'

"My head went round . . . I think I raised some objection. . . . At last we loaded another pistol, and rolled up two pieces of paper. He placed these latter in his cap—the same through which I had once sent a bullet—and again I drew the first number.

" 'You are devilish lucky, Count,' said he, with a smile that I shall never forget.

"I don't know what was the matter with me, or how it was that he managed to make me do it . . . but I fired and hit that picture."

The Count pointed with his finger to the perforated picture; his face glowed like fire; the Countess was whiter than her own handkerchief; and I could not restrain an exclamation.

"I fired," continued the Count, "and, thank Heaven, missed my aim. Then Silvio . . . at that moment he was really terrible. . . . Silvio raised his hand to take aim at me. Suddenly the door opens, Masha rushes into the room, and with a loud shriek throws herself upon my neck. Her presence restored to me all my courage.

" 'My dear,' said I to her, 'don't you see that we are joking? How frightened you are! Go and drink a glass of water and then come back to us; I will introduce you to an old friend and comrade.'

"Masha still doubted.

" 'Tell me, is my husband speaking the truth?' said she, turning to the terrible Silvio: 'is it true that you are only joking?'

" 'He is always joking, Countess,' replied Silvio: 'once he gave me a slap in the face in a joke; on another occasion he sent a bullet through my cap in a joke; and just now, when he fired at me and missed me, it was all in a joke. And now I feel inclined for a joke.'

"With these words he raised his pistol to take aim at me—right before her! Masha threw herself at his feet.

"'Rise, Masha; are you not ashamed!' I cried in a rage: 'and you, sir, will you cease to make fun of a poor woman? Will you fire or not?'

"'I will not,' replied Silvio: 'I am satisfied. I have seen your confusion, your alarm. I forced you to fire at me. That is sufficient. You will remember me. I leave you to your conscience.'

"Then he turned to go, but pausing in the doorway, and looking at the picture that my shot had passed through, he fired at it almost without taking aim, and disappeared. My wife had fainted away; the servants did not venture to stop him, the mere look of him filled them with horror. He went out upon the steps, called his coachman, and drove off before I could recover myself."

The Count was silent. In this way I learned the end of the story, whose beginning had once made such a deep impression upon me. The hero of it I never saw again. It is said that Silvio commanded a detachment of Hetairists during the revolt under Alexander Ipsilanti, and that he was killed in the battle of Skoulana.

Sealed Room

For many years there stood in a side street in Kiel an unpretentious old frame house which had a forbidding, almost sinister appearance, with its old-fashioned balcony and its overhanging upper stories. For the last twenty years the house had been occupied by a greatly respected widow, Madame Wolff, to whom the dwelling had come by inheritance. She lived there quietly with her one daughter, in somewhat straitened circumstances.

What gave the house a mysterious notoriety, augmenting the sinister quality in its appearance, was the fact that one of its rooms, a corner room on the main floor, had not been opened for generations. The door was firmly fastened and sealed with plaster, as well as the window looking out upon the street. Above the door was an old inscription, dated 1603, which threatened sudden death and eternal damnation to any human being who dared to open the door or efface the inscription. Neither door nor window had been opened in the two hundred years that had passed since the inscription was put up. But for a generation back or more, the partition wall and the sealed door had been covered with wall paper, and the inscription had been almost forgotten.

The room adjoining the sealed chamber was a large hall, utilized only for rare important events. Such an occasion arose with the wedding of the only daughter of the house. For that evening the great hall, as it was called, was brilliantly decorated and illuminated for a ball. The building had deep cellars and the old floors were elastic. Madame Wolff had in vain endeavored to avoid using the great hall

at all, for the foolish old legend of the sealed chamber aroused a certain superstitious dread in her heart, and she rarely if ever entered the hall herself. But merry Miss Elizabeth, her pretty young daughter, was passionately fond of dancing, and her mother had promised that she should have a ball on her wedding day. Her betrothed, Secretary Winther, was also a good dancer, and the two young people combated the mother's prejudice against the hall and laughed at her fear of the sealed room. They thought it would be wiser to appear to ignore the stupid legend altogether, and thus to force the world to forget it. In spite of secret misgivings Madame Wolff yielded to their arguments. And for the first time in many years the merry strains of dance music were heard in the great hall that lay next the mysterious sealed chamber.

The bridal couple, as well as the wedding guests, were in the gayest mood, and the ball was an undoubted success. The dancing was interrupted for an hour while supper was served in an adjoining room. After the repast the guests returned to the hall, and it was several hours more before the last dance was called. The season was early autumn and the weather still balmy. The windows had been opened to freshen the air. But the walls retained their dampness and suddenly the dancers noticed that the old wall paper which covered the partition wall between the hall and the sealed chamber had been loosened through the jarring of the building, and had fallen away from the sealed door with its mysterious inscription.

The story of the sealed chamber had been almost forgotten by most of those present, forgotten with many other old legends heard in childhood. The inscription thus suddenly revealed naturally aroused great interest, and there was a general curiosity to know what the mysterious closed room might hide. Conjectures flew from mouth to mouth. Some insisted that the closed door must hide the traces of a hideous murder, or some other equally terrible crime. Others suggested that perhaps the room had been used as a hiding place for garments and other articles belonging to some person who had died of a pestilence, and that the room had been sealed for fear of spreading the disease. Still others thought that in the sealed chamber there might be found a secret entrance from the cellars, which had made the room available as a hiding place for robbers or smugglers. The guests had quite forgotten their dancing in the interest awakened by the sight of the mysterious door.

"For mercy's sake, don't let's go too near it!" exclaimed some of the young ladies. But the majority thought it would be great fun to see what was hidden there. Most of the men said that they considered it foolish not to have opened the door long ago, and examined the room. The young bridegroom did not join in this opinion, however. He upheld the decision of his mother-in-law not to allow any attempt to effect an entrance into the room. He knew that there was a clause in the title deeds to the house which made the express stipulation that no owner should ever permit the corner room to be opened. There was discussion among the guests as to whether such a clause in a title deed could be binding for several hundred years, and many

doubted its validity at any time. But most of them understood why Madame Wolff did not wish any investigation, even should any of those present have sufficient courage to dare the curse and break open the door.

"Nonsense! What great courage is necessary for that?" exclaimed Lieutenant Flemming Wolff, a cousin of the bride of the evening. This gentleman had a reputation that was not of the best. He was known to live mostly on debt and pawn tickets, and was of a most quarrelsome disposition. As a duelist he was feared because of his specialty. This was the ability, and the inclination, through a trick in the use of the foils, to disfigure his opponent's face badly, without at all endangering his life. In this manner he had already sadly mutilated several brave officers and students, who had had the bad luck to stand up against him. He himself was anything but pleasant to look upon, his natural plainness having been rendered repellent by a life of low debauchery. He cherished a secret grudge against the bridegroom and bitter feelings toward the bride, because the latter had so plainly shown her aversion for him when he had ventured to pay suit to her.

The family had not desired any open break with this disagreeable relative, and had therefore sent him an invitation to the wedding. They had taken it for granted that, under the circumstances, he would prefer to stay away. But he had appeared at the ball, and, perhaps to conceal his resentment, he had been the most indefatigable dancer of the evening. At supper he had partaken freely of the strongest wines, and was plainly showing the effect of them by this time. His eyes rolled wildly, and those who knew him took care not to contradict him, or to have anything to say to him at all.

With a boastful laugh he repeated his assertion that it didn't take much courage to open a sealed door, especially when there might be a fortune concealed behind it. In his opinion it was cowardly to let oneself be frightened by a century-old legend. *He* wouldn't let that bother him if *he* had influence enough in the family to win the daughter and induce the mother to give a ball in the haunted hall. With this last hit he hoped to arouse the young husband's ire. But the latter merely shrugged his shoulders and turned away with a smile of contempt.

Lieutenant Wolff fired up at this, and demanded to know whether the other intended to call his, the lieutenant's, courage into question by his behavior.

"Not in the slightest, when it is a matter of obtaining a loan, or of mutilating an adversary with a trick at fencing," answered the bridegroom angrily, taking care, however, that neither the bride nor any of the other ladies should hear his words. Then he continued in a whisper: "But I don't believe you'd have the courage to remain here alone and in darkness, before this closed door, for a single hour. If you wish to challenge me for this doubt, I am at your disposal as soon as you have proven me in the wrong. But I choose the weapons."

"They must be chosen by lot, sir cousin," replied the lieutenant, his cheek pale and his jaws set. "I will expect you to breakfast to-morrow morning at eight o'clock."

The bridegroom nodded, and took the other's cold dry hand for an instant. The men who had overheard the short conversation looked upon it as a meaningless incident, the memory of which would disappear from the lieutenant's brain with the vanishing wine fumes.

The ball was now over. The bride left the hall with her husband and several of the guests who were to accompany the young couple to their new home. The lights went out in the old house. The door of the dancing hall had been locked from the outside. Lieutenant Flemming Wolff remained alone in the room, having hidden himself in a dark corner where he had not been seen by the servants, who had extinguished the lights and locked the door. The night watchman had just called out two o'clock when the solitary guest found himself, still giddy from the heavy wine, alone in the great dark hall in front of the mysterious door.

The windows were at only a slight elevation from the street, and a spring would take him to safety should his desire to remain there, or to solve the mystery of the sealed room, vanish. But next morning all the windows in the great hall were found closed, just as the servants had left them the night before. The night watchman reported that he had heard a hollow-sounding crash in that unoccupied part of the house during the night. But that was nothing unusual, as there was a general belief in the neighborhood that the house was haunted.

For hollow noises were often heard there, and sounds as of money falling on the floor, and rattling and clinking as of a factory machine. Enlightened people, it is true, explained these sounds as echoes of the stamping and other natural noises from a large stable just behind the old house. But in spite of these explanations and their eminent feasibility, the dread of the unoccupied portion of the house was so great that not even the most reckless man servant could be persuaded to enter it alone after nightfall.

Next morning at eight o'clock Winther appeared at his mother-in-law's door, saying that he had forgotten something of importance in the great hall the night before. Madame Wolff had not yet arisen, but the maid who let in the early visitor noticed with surprise that he had a large pistol sticking out of one of his pockets.

Winther had been to his cousin's apartment and found it locked. He now entered the great hall, and at first glance thought it empty. To his alarm and astonishment, however, he saw that the sealed door had been broken open. He approached it with anxiety, and found his wife's cousin, the doughty duelist, lying pale and lifeless on the threshold. Beside him lay a large stone which had struck his head in falling and must have killed him at once. Over the door was a hole in the wall, just the size of the stone. The latter had evidently rested on the upper edge of the door, and must certainly have fallen on its opening. The unfortunate man lay half in the mysterious chamber and half in the hall, just as he must have fallen when the stone struck him.

The formal investigation of the closed room was made in the presence of the police authorities. It contained nothing but a small safe which was built

into the wall. When the safe had been opened by force, an inner chamber, which had to be broken open by itself, was found to contain a number of rolls of gold pieces, many jewels and numerous notes and I. O. U.'s. The treasure was covered by an old document. From this latter it was learned that the owner of the house two hundred years ago had been a silk weaver by the name of Flemming Ambrosius Wolff. He was said to have lent money on security for many years, but had died apparently a poor man, because he had so carefully hidden his riches that little of it was found after his death.

With a niggardliness that bordered on madness, he had believed that he could hide his treasure forever by shutting it up in the sealed room. The curse over the door was to frighten away any venturesome mortal, and further security was given by the clause in the title deed.

The universally disliked Lieutenant Flemming Wolff must have had many characteristics in common with his disagreeable old ancestor, to whose treasure he would have fallen heir had he not lost his life in the discovering of it. The old miser had not hidden his wealth for all eternity, as he had hoped, but had only brought about the inheriting of it by Madame Wolff, the owner of the house, and the next of kin. The first use to which this lady put the money was to tear down the uncanny old building and to erect in its stead a beautiful new home for her daughter and son-in-law.

An Indian Amazon

PINE LEAF — Bar-chee-am-pe — possessed, for a Crow Indian, great intellectual powers. She was endowed with extraordinary muscular strength, with the activity of the cat and the speed of the antelope. Her features were pleasing, and her form symmetrical. She had lost a brother in an attack—a great brave, and her twin brother. He was a fine specimen of the race of red men, and bade fair to rise to distinction; but he was struck down in his strength, and Pine Leaf was left to avenge his death. She was at that time twelve years of age, and she solemnly vowed that she would never marry until she had killed a hundred of the enemy with her own hand. Whenever a war-party started, Pine Leaf was the first to volunteer to accompany them. Her presence among them caused much amusement to the old veterans; but if she lacked physical strength, she always rode the fleetest horses, and none of the warriors could outstrip her. All admired her for her ambition, and as she advanced in years, many of the braves grew anxious for the speedy accomplishment of her vow. She had chosen my party to serve in, and when I engaged in the fiercest struggles, no one was more promptly at my side than the young heroine. She seemed incapable of fear; and when she arrived at womanhood, could fire a gun without flinching, and use the Indian weapons with as great dexterity as the most accomplished warrior.

I began to feel more than a common attachment toward her. Her intelligence charmed me, and her modest and becoming demeanor singled her out from her sex. One day, while riding leisurely along, I asked her to marry me provided we both returned safe.

She flashed her dark eye upon mine, "You have too many already," she said. "Do you suppose I would break my vow to the Great Spirit? He sees and knows all things; he would be angry with me, and would not suffer me to live to avenge my brother's death.

I told her that my medicine said that I must marry her, and then I could never be vanquished or killed in battle. She laughed and said, "Well, I will marry you."

"When we return?"

"No; but when the pine-leaves turn yellow."

I reflected that it would soon be autumn, and regarded her promise as valid. A few days afterward it occurred to my mind that pine-leaves do not turn yellow, and I saw I had been practised upon.

When I again spoke to her on the subject, I said, "Pine Leaf, you promised to marry me when the pine-leaves should turn yellow: it has occurred to me that they never turn yellow."

She returned no answer except a hearty laugh.

"Am I to understand that you never intend to marry me?" I inquired.

"Yes, I will marry you," she said, with a coquettish smile.

"But when?"

"When you shall find a red-headed Indian."

I saw I advanced nothing by importuning her, and I let the matter rest. However, to help her on with her vow, I never killed an Indian if she was by to perform it for me, thinking that when her number were immolated there might be better chance of pressing my suit.

On one occasion Pine Leaf had captured two prisoners, and offered me one of them to wife. I answered, "You once told me I had already wives enough. I will not add to their number until I marry the heroine of the Crow nation."

"Ah, you have found the red-headed Indian, then," she said, laughing mockingly.

She always received my advances with this unsatisfactory nonchalance, so that it was with some unpleasantness of feeling I approached the subject. But the more I saw of her lofty bearing, and witnessed the heroic deeds that she performed, the more ardent became my attachment to her. When she was by my side in battle, it seemed as if I had increased strength and courage; when she was away, which happened rarely, I felt a vacancy which no other warrior could supply. There was none bolder than herself, and she knew it; there were others of greater strength, but her deficiency in muscular power was more than indemnified by her catlike agility, and she would kill her man while others were preparing to attack.

There was one thing that irritated the noble girl's curiosity, and that was the warpath secret. Having killed many in battle, having followed where any dared to lead, "Why am I debarred from that important communication?" she would ask. "Why am I sent off with the women and children, when that secret is told the warriors of but one battle?"

I would tell her that the misfortune of her sex rendered it impossible that she could ever have the secret unveiled to her; that, should she break her trust, she would surely pay the forfeit with her life. She would become angry at such representations, and her black eyes would glow like fire.

During one of her expeditions, Pine Leaf, who charged gallantly to the attack by my side, was wounded with a bullet, which broke her left arm just below the elbow. Placing her wounded arm in her bosom, she grew more desperate than ever, and three of the enemy met their death from the point of her lance after she received her wound. Becoming faint from loss of blood, she was constrained to retire. Her arm was set in good style by Dr. Walton, at Gardner's camp, and in a few weeks it was sound again.

When I started on my excursion to the As-ne-boines, Pine Leaf begged to accompany me. Her arm was far from sound, and I refused to take her. However, soon after I had left, one of my leaders invaded the Cheyenne country, and, regardless of my wishes, she accompanied the expedition. She was brought home, as all supposed, mortally wounded. A ball had penetrated her left breast, just escaping the heart; it had passed through her body, coming out at the shoulderblade, and tearing away a portion of it in its exit. On seeing her in this pitiable condition, I resigned all hope of her recovery. "So

much," said I, "for disregarding my counsel. I would not allow you to go with me, in consideration of your wound; but you took advantage of my absence, and now you are done for."

"Well," she replied, "I am sorry that I did not listen to my chief; but I gained two *coos*."

The party accompanying her lost four warriors, wounded in rescuing her, and saving her scalp. She eventually recovered, but it was a long while before she could again go to war.

Though a woman, her influence was everywhere strongly felt, even in council. She had a gift of speech which the bravest warriors might well envy; she was ever listened to with admiration, and in truth, though young, her judgment on all important matters was generally guided by sound sense.

During an attack on the Black Feet Pine Leaf cut her way through in advance of me, and was dodging first one way and then the other, as she waited for me to come up.

"Why do you wait to be killed?" she inquired. "If you wish to die, let us return together; I will die with you."

. . . The heroine lost one joint off the little finger of her right hand, amputated with a bullet; the little finger of her other hand she had cut off at the death of her twin-brother.

A successful raid had just been made upon an enemy village. Here I succeeded in having a good joke at the heroine's expense, with which I plagued her for a long time. She was swifter on foot than any warrior and we were on foot during this excursion. On seeing us advance, a young Indian, about sixteen, took to his heels, running like a deer. The heroine made after him with her antelope speed, certain to catch him. The Indian did his best, frequently turning his head, like a negro with an alligator at his heels. Seeing that his pursuer must overtake him, and not relishing the idea of having her lance transfix his body—for she was preparing to hurl it—he suddenly stopped and faced about, at the same time throwing his bow down and holding up both hands to beg for his life. She did what no other warrior in our party would have done—her woman's heart took pity on the poor fellow's pitiable condition—she spared his life, and marched him back captive.

He being her prisoner, no one had authority over his life but herself. He was a fine-looking young man, but when he was brought among the Crow warriors he trembled in every joint, expecting nothing less than to be killed.

I thought this too good an opportunity for a joke not to make use of it.

"I see," said I, addressing myself to Pine Leaf, "you have refused all our braves that you might win a husband from the enemy."

All the warriors shouted at this sally; but the poor girl was sorely perplexed, and knew not what to do or say. We rallied her so much on her conquest that she finally became quite spunky, and I did not know whether she would run her prize through with her lance or not. One day I told her I had talked with her prisoner about his capture. "Well," said she, "and what has he to say about it?"

"Why," I answered, "he says he could have killed you as well as not, but that you promised to marry him if he would spare your life."

She was fully practised upon, and she flushed with anger. "He lies!" she exclaimed. "You know I cannot speak to these Black Feet, or I would make him tell a different tale. I have often told you, as well as other warriors, that I do not wish to marry; my tongue was straight when I said so. I have told you often, and I have told your sisters and you wives, that, if ever I did marry, I would have you, and none other. So why do you trifle with my feelings?"

What she said was a genuine ebullition of feeling; for, although an Indian girl, her heart was as proud, as sensitive, and as delicate as ever beat in the breast of civilized woman. To soothe her ruffled temper, I told her I would intrust a secret to her. I had undertaken my prolonged journey, when all supposed me dead, and she along with the rest, solely to search through the Rocky Mountains for a "red-headed Indian." I had been unsuccessful in my search, and had returned with spotted horses.

She laughed immoderately at my invention.

At another time I had been missing for some while, and the Crows, fearing my death at the hands of the whites, had planned to massacre those in the neighbourhood. I returned in time, however, to prevent this and reprimanded the warrior chiefs for their intended treachery. My meeting was interrupted by tones uttered outside the gate, which at that moment fell upon my ear, and which I readily recognized as the voice of Pine Leaf.

She was haranguing her warriors in an animated manner, and delivering what, in civilized life, would be called her valedictory address.

"Warriors!" she said, "I am now about to make a great sacrifice for my people. For many winters I have been on the war-path with you; I shall tread that path no more; you have now to fight the enemy without me. When I laid down my needle and my beads, and took up the battle-axe and the lance, my arm was weak; but few winters had passed over my head. My brother had been killed by the enemy, and was gone to the hunting-ground of the Great Spirit. I saw him in my dreams. He would beckon to his sister to come to him. It was my heart's desire to go to him, but I wished first to become a warrior, that I might avenge his death upon his foes before I went away.

"I said I would kill one hundred foes before I married any living man. I have more than kept my word, as our great chief and medicine men can tell you. As my arm increased in strength, the enemy learned to fear me. I have accomplished the task I set before me; henceforward I leave the warpaths of my people; I have fought my last battle, and hurled my last lance; I am a warrior no more.

"To-day the Medicine Calf has returned. He has returned angry at the follies of his people, and they fear that he will leave them again. They believe that he loves me, and that my devotion to him will attach him to the nation. I therefore bestow myself upon him; perhaps he will be contented with me, and will leave us no more. Warriors, farewell!"

She then entered the fort, and said, "Sparrowhawks, one who has followed you for many winters is about to leave

your war-path forever. When have you seen Bar-chee-am-pe shrink from the charge? You have seen her lance red with the blood of the enemy more than ten times ten. You know what her vow was, and you know she has kept her word. Many of you have tried to make her break her word, which you knew she had passed to the Great Spirit when she lost her brother. But you found that, though a woman, she had the heart of a warrior.

"Do not turn your heads, but listen. You have seen that a woman could keep her word. During the many winters that I have followed you faithfully in the war-path, you have refused to let me into the war-path secret, although you tell it to striplings on their second excursion. It was unfair that I could not know it; that I must be sent away with the women and children, when the secret was made known to those one-battle braves. If you had seen fit to tell it to me, it would have been secret until my death. But let it go; I care no farther for it.

"I am about to sacrifice what I have always chosen to preserve—my liberty. The back of my steed has been my lodge and my home. On his back, armed with my lance and battle-axe, I knew no fear. The medicine chief, when fighting by my side, has displayed a noble courage and a lofty spirit, and he won from my heart, what no other warrior has ever won, the promise to marry him when my vow was fulfilled. He has done much for our people; he has fought their enemies, and spilled his blood for them. When I shall become his wife, I shall be fond and faithful to him. My heart feels pure before the Great Spirit and the sun. When I shall be no more on the war-path, obey the voice of the Medicine Calf, and you will grow stronger and stronger; we shall continue a great and a happy people, and he will leave us no more. I have done."

She then approached me, every eye being intently fixed upon her. She placed her hand under my chin, and lifted my head forcibly up. "Look at me," she said: "I know that your heart is crying for the follies of the people. But let it cry no more. I know you have ridden day and night to keep us from evil. You have made us strong, and your desire is to preserve us strong. Now stay at home with us; you will not be obliged to go to war more than twice in twelve moons. And now, my friend, I am yours after you have so long been seeking me. I believe you love me, for you have often told me you did, and I believe you have not a forked tongue. Our lodge shall be a happy one; and when you depart to the happy hunting-ground, I will be already there to welcome you. This day I become your wife—Bar-chee-am-pe is a warrior no more."

Pine Leaf left the fort with my sisters to go and dress for the short marriage ceremony. She had so long worn the war-costume that female apparel seemed hardly to become her; she returned so transformed in appearance that the beholder could scarcely recognize her for the same person.

When I visited her lodge in the evening I found her dressed like a queen, with a lodge full of my own and her relatives to witness the nuptials. She was naturally a pensive, deep-thinking girl; her mind seemed absorbed in some other object than

worldly matters. It might be that her continual remembrance of her brother's early fall had tinged her mind with melancholy, or it might be constitutional to her; but for an Indian girl she had more of that winning grace, more of those feminine blandishments —in short, she approached nearer to our *ideal* of a woman than her savage birth and breed would seem to render possible.

Pine Leaf, the pride and admiration of her people, was no longer the dauntless and victorious warrior, the avenger of the fall of her brother. She retired from the field of her glory, and became the affectionate wife of the Medicine Calf.

Autobiography of a Thief

I DID nothing that I particularly remember until I was fifteen, except learn my lessons, with now and then a fight. I lived with my mother in Edinburgh. One day a person of gentlemanly appearance met a band of us as we were going to school, and inquired for me by name. He took me aside into a tavern, and, after treating me, revealed himself to me as my father. He also gave me a crown, and promised to see me again; but was unfortunately prevented, or perhaps forgot.

My education being now considered complete, I went to receive lessons in anatomy, at which I remained for the space of nine months.

I now formed an acquaintance with a young lady. (At this time I was staying with my godfather upon my mother's decease.) But she was unfortunately a Romanist, and on this account my godfather ordered me to leave off her acquaintance, which I refusing, he ordered me out of the house. I complied with his harsh mandate, but first collecting all the money I could find, which amounted to about £50, and with this I went to Dunfermline, and from there to the Rumbling Brigg, where I lodged with a couple well to do. I paid my board while my money lasted; but being now empty, and my host finding I was a scholar, I agreed to give him three lessons a day upon the sly, for which he privately contracted to give me secretly the money to pay his wife my board.

This lasted three months; but one evening as we were at our studies, and having neglected to lock the door, being become too bold by past impunity, the wife, who had discovered our retreat, having listened a moment or two, burst suddenly in upon us, and falling on her knees, exclaimed,

"Good heavens, am I married to a man who does not know that three times five make fifteen?" and burst into a flood of tears and reproaches.

This was the line of the table he was unfortunately repeating to me at the time.

His wife's conduct raising a counter-excitement in my pupil, and finding I had lighted a flame which would not easily be extinguished, I thought proper to retire and go back to Dunfermline. Here I learned my first trade of the many I have practiced.

I engaged myself to a master weaver and petty manufacturer. Besides learning to take drafts of patterns, etc., I used to cast his accounts. But one day he sent me to the bank to draw some money: on this I absconded with the money, and went to Edinburgh.

He pursued me so closely that, with the aid of the police, he apprehended me before I had time to spend it. To avoid punishment, I gave him back the money all but seventeen shillings, and he, who was a good-natured man, wished me to go back to my place; but, having borne a good name in the place until then, I thought shame to go back; so I went to Newcastle after borrowing of my late master 15*s.* for the journey.

At Newcastle I went into a chemist's shop for some cough-lozenges. Now it happened that a woman in the shop asked for some medicine. I forget just now what it was, but the shop-boy took down the wrong; he took down a bottle containing chamomile, I remember that; so I told the boy that he mistook the Latin term. This naturally attracted the master's attention, and he looked up and saw I was correct; so then he asked me several questions, and finding me fit for his purpose, he took me into his service, and here for a long while all my sorrows were at an end, for I took a delight in studying my master's interests, and laying up knowledge.

He favored me with his instructions, and I enjoyed at times the company of his daughter, which was to me a comfort above all, and with whom I felt myself soon deep in love, and with her I spent many a happy hour after the business of the day was over, walking out in the evenings, while the moon with her bright and gentle rays gave to all things a delightful appearance, and seemed to lift up our minds to something above the groveling cares of Time—or we heard the plaintive notes of the nightingale breaking the silence of the night, and calling us to join him in his songs of praise to the God of Nature. But sweeter still than the voice of the nightingale was the voice of my companion, which was sweetest of all when its topic would run to that portion which forms the golden part of Cupid's dart.

In these innocent joys I spent four years.

But one unfortunate evening, having a drop too much at the time, I met Miss B. as usual, and opportunity and temptation unfortunately occurring, I was guilty of a felony that has always remained on my conscience more than any of those acts I have been guilty of, which the law describes to be the highest crimes.

From that night our walks beneath the moon by the river side were no longer innocent, and we were no longer happy.

Oh cursed night and place that robbed a virgin of her purity! and oh cursed Tyne, why did not thou overflow thy banks and drive me away? If now thy fountain-spring was to pour out streams of flaming lava, it would not purge the disgrace out of thy dark banks—nay, if thy banks themselves were to become gold, they would not ranson the character lost on that night, nor restore the rest and quiet that now fled from my pillow.

Four months had scarce elapsed before I learned that consequences of a serious kind were to be expected.

I was in great perplexity. At last, taking a desperate course, I with much

hesitation asked my master for his daughter's hand.

My master, who, though a good-natured, was a hasty man, turned black and red at the idea, but recovering himself soon, he turned it off as a jest. I saw by this that he would never consent, and, dreading discovery, I got a friend of mine to write to me from Edinburgh that my sister lay at the point of death, and begged to see me.

Showing this letter to my master, I got leave of absence and a present for the journey, with which I started, promising to return in a week, but with no such intention.

I arrived at Edinburgh, and found my sister, whom I had spoken of as dying, just on the eve of marriage. I was at the wedding, but the nuptial feast was no feast to me, for it only recalled the thoughts of my own guilt.

I now began the world again.

I went to Stirling and obtained a situation with a baker; but the work was much too hard for me, so I left him in two days, and took with me three pound ten shillings; was apprehended in Glasgow, and got sixty days.

On receiving my liberty I enlisted in her majesty's service, and was marched on board the "Pique" frigate bound for the West Indies.

Here I remained until we got to Plymouth, where I made my escape, but was retaken in the town, and brought back to the ship and put in irons on the spardeck under cover of a tarpaulin: this was my prison till we reached St. Vincent. We anchored here for two days, and in the confusion of getting under-weigh again I watched my opportunity, and having broken my padlock the day before, I stole into the captain's cabin, he being on deck, and took away a suit of his clothes, and dropped into the water; and the weather being calm, and I being an excellent swimmer, I swam alongside a brigantine that lay at anchor in the bay, and hailing her from the surface of the water, sang out, "Halloo! are you short of hands?"

"We are," was the reply; "where do you hail from?"

"What has that to do with it?" said I. So they hauled me on board.

The master, finding I had been educated, sent me on shore to his brother who kept a store; and so now I was his shopman.

I lived with my new master: we used to come to the shop in the morning, and go home at night. We lived a mile and a half out of the town in a pretty Gothic house, which stood in the middle of a delightful garden bordered by sugar-canes. In front of the house was an avenue of orange and lemon trees mixed; their branches bent with the exuberance of the fruit; and the ground glittered with great shaddocks and limes, that lay like lumps of gold, unheeded and rotting for abundance. The air, too, was filled with the scent of thousands of rich flowers that were scattered about, some by Nature, some by the hand of man; in short, it was an earthly paradise, in which I might have ended my days if the demon of change had not filled my mind with the desire to behold once more my native country. Stupid fool!

I set sail, and after a stormy passage reached the port of London.

I lodged in the Commercial Road till

my money was nearly gone, and then I became disconsolate.

Wandering one day in the Ratcliffe Highway, it was my luck to fall in with an old acquaintance, whom I had known through being in trouble together. He introduced me to a lodging-house-keeper in the neighborhood, who, after a few words with my companion, told me "it was all right; we should find means of settling."

I went to bed, and when I wanted to get up my clothes were stolen, with the few shillings I had left. Remonstrating with the landlord, he said, "Oh, it is a mistake," and disappearing for a few minutes, during which I heard high words and a bit of a tussle, he returned with my clothes and money.

The next day, seeing me very dull, and concluding by that I was ripe for business, he inquired the cause of my uneasiness.

I told him my last shilling was melting.

He laughed at this cause of trouble.

"You don't know," said he, "you are in the Mint."

"In the Mint?" said I.

"Yes," was his reply; "in the Mint, my boy"; and with that he took up a chisel and went to the chimney, and carefully removed a loose brick, and took out of the gap a tin box. He opened the box, and coins of every sort in profusion flashed upon my bewildered eyes; and not only coins, but dies and metal of all sorts for making them.

"Now," said Crœsus, "having gone so far, you must take the oath at once."

Four men and four females were then summoned, and, standing in the middle of them, I took a solemn oath to this effect:

> "I hereby swear never to tell any one how to make 'shoffle,' nor where I learned it, nor yet to use any kind of language that may lead to the same upon pain of death."

Here followed imprecations upon my eyes and limbs, if broken, such as are used among freemasons, etc., but not being fit for your reverence's ears, I suppress that part.

The next process was to go and change a base sovereign, which I did accordingly, returning with nineteen and sixpence and of which sixpence went for the gin.

Behold me now a shoffle-pitcher. But it was never my way to remain at the bottom of any business that I found worth studying. I therefore, in the course of six months, learned to coin first a shilling, then a sovereign, then the most difficult of all, a crown; and last of all, to make the moulds for each of these coins; and as soon as I found I could make a mould for a crown, I dissolved partnership, and went to Gravesend on my own bottom.

Your reverence will blame me less for this revolt if I tell you the terms on which we worked with him whom I have called Crœsus, and his name did begin with a C.

He had the half of every coin we uttered; he had the cost of the metal besides, and the half of every article purchased in the process of uttering.

Now this was not fair; at least I think not, because he did not share the risk.

I pitched on my own account about

a month; then finding the trade stale, and having once or twice narrowly missed being apprehended, I returned to London and betook myself to the diligent study of house-breaking. I learned from a master how to make false keys; and having money by me, and courting the company of the best cracksmen, and listening to all they said with respect and attention, I attracted notice, and was made a member of the body, and soon after permitted to take part in a job. It was a doctor's shop in the Commercial Road, and my share came to £50. And this was only the first of many transactions of the kind.

And as it becomes every one that is in a business to master it if possible, I will tell your reverence how I attended to mine, trusting you will not make it generally public, as it is not considered honorable among us to reveal the secrets of business, but only on account of your goodness I am willing to put you on your guard, and also your own friends—that is to say, such of them as have got any thing to lose; but hope it will go no farther than the jail.

Now, as the chief work of practitioners in our line is to find out where the money or valuables are kept, this was my plan:

If it was a shop, I should go in and buy something, give the shopman a sovereign and notice where he put it, and from whence he took the change, and at the same time how the door was fastened, whether with a lock or bar, or while my pal (for we always went in pairs) was engaging the shopman, I would take the dimensions of the same.

Or, if it was a dwelling-house, I would go and present the mistress with a card stating I was a china or glass mender, a French polisher, a teacher of music or dancing, and try every move to get admittance into the parlor, and then you may be sure my eyes were not shut.

Or else I would go and offer the servant some article for sale as a hawker, and would chaff and flatter her, and so perhaps get a notion where the plate was kept, and the next week come and fetch it away.

In the course of a few weeks I had collected somewhere about one hundred pounds in money and valuables, and finding the police had scent of me, I left London and went down by the Leith smack to Edinburgh.

Here I visited my friends, and passed myself off in their society for a thriving tradesman.

I also sent some money to Miss B.—not that money could repay the injury I had done her, but still it would make her friends more civil to see that she wanted for nothing.

If my real character had not got wind in Newcastle, I think at this time they would have let me marry her, and I think, bad as I am, I should have mended for her sake, for she was the only woman I ever really loved.

It is an old saying, that "the money which comes by the wind goes by the water."

I have made thousands, but never could keep so much as a £5 note.

In about a month nearly all my money was melted, and I set out on a cruise again.

Falling into some of my old haunts in Yorkshire I met with a friend who manufactured base coin, and, having passed a quantity of this and being now

at my ease, I determined to study a new profession.

I therefore secluded myself from all my idle companions, took a quiet lodging, bought several medical books, and studied the human frame and the disorders to which it is subject.

I studied night and day with the same diligence I had given to coining, house-breaking, and my other professions.

In about a month I considered myself fit to start, which I accordingly did with as much pomp as I could command, having seen how far that goes toward success in the learned professions.

I engaged a servant with a handsome livery to deliver my bills at the most respectable doors, and attend upon me when I addressed the public.

I had a thousand bills printed representing myself as Dr. Scott from Edinburgh, and I furnished myself with testimonials from respectable parties—I mean that would have been, but who, in point of fact, had no existence—and printed them at the foot of my bills.

My plan was, on entering a town, first to go for the more respectable customers by putting up at a good inn, making friends with the landlord, and sending my footman round with my bills; but before leaving I used to appear in my true colors as an itinerant quack.

In this capacity I used to harangue the people and sell my drugs.

In my public discourses I always ran down the regular practitioner, as we are all obliged to do, and the plan I used to follow was cool irony: I found this went farther than pretending to get into a heat.

Unlike most quacks, I did not apply one or two remedies to every disorder, and I met with wonderful success, especially with the women; partly, I think, because with them imagination goes far, and my patter inspired them with more confidence than the regular doctors could, not having the gift of the gab.

While traveling as a doctor I never would accept money from any of my patients until the disease, whatever it might be, took a turn for the better; and even then my charges were always low; but, to make up, I did pass a deal of base coin wherever I traveled.

The following were some of my most remarkable cures:

The landlady of a public house at York of a dysentery.

At Wakefield I reduced an imposthume which the proprietor was going to have cut if it had not been for me.

At Hull I actually cured a respectable woman of a cataract, and was praised in the public journals.

These and a hundred ordinary cures are the benefits I rendered the public in return for the many wrongs I have done it.

I had been practicing pharmacy some three months when one day I received a letter from Newcastle.

It was from Miss B.'s uncle, telling me I might visit her now.

The letter was very short, and there was something about it I did not understand; so that, instead of filling me with delight, as such a letter would a while ago, I set out for Newcastle flush of cash but full of perplexity.

I reached Newcastle, and, lest her friends should have changed their mind again, and receive me with an affront, I went to an ale-house convenient to

her residence, and sent for her younger brother, who had never been so much against me as the others.

He came directly, and I began to put a dozen questions to him; but he maintained silence; he hung his head and said, "Don't ask me—you will soon know—and since you are here, come without loss of time"; and he led the way in gloomy silence.

I was taken into the house and after some little delay was allowed to go up into her room: I shall never forget it.

Her cheeks that used to be like two roses, were now pale and ghastly, and her beaming eyes were dull and sunk in her head; only her voice and her smile were as sweet as ever.

Her first word was, "I have only waited for this." Then she stretched out her hand, and thanked me in a sweet and composed tone of voice "for coming to perform the last part of a husband's duty"; but here her feelings overcame her, and the poor thing burst into a flood of tears, and I fell on my knees, and sobbed and cried with her; and her relations somehow felt that they were not to come between us any more now, and they looked at one another and left the room without any noise, and we were alone a little while.

And then I kneeled down again and prayed her to forgive the injury I had done her person and character; and then she answered like a woman that she was to blame and not I; and this answer from her, and she dying, went through me like a knife, and I prayed to die for her, or at least die with her; and bursting into unmanly and useless grief, and groveling in anguish and remorse upon the floor, some of them came in and interfered for her sake, and very properly led me away—and not in an unkind manner, for which may God bless them any way.

I hope your reverence may never feel as I did: I had no acute sense of grief or pain—bodily or mental pain would have been a relief—I felt dead—my body seemed dead, my heart seemed dead.

I crawled to my inn, and crawled into bed, and lay sleepless but motionless till daybreak. Then I rose and went down to the river-side, and walked up and down, and at about nine, when I thought the family would be up, I went to the house.

The moment I came in sight of the house I saw all the shutters were up. But it gave me scarcely any shock, for I was stone, and I seemed to know before this that all was over.

They wished me to see her, but I was unable then; but the day before she was buried I took a last look at her: it did not seem to be her, but only some shell or frame she had once inhabited—now a ruinous heap of corruption; and that is an awful word.

Is it a castle? there was a time when the heart of the bold soldier burned with ardor to defend it.

Is it a senate? there was a time when the loud applause of eloquence thundered from its roof—

Or is it a temple? there was a time when the white-stoled priest called down the fire from heaven to bless the sacrifice.

But here is a temple, one not made with hands, the architecture of which is too sublime for our minds to conceive, a temple that was erected to be the seat of its Maker, one in which dwelt not only the image, but the spirit

of its Creator: let me ask, then, why was it thus left desolate, and whither has its tenant gone?

Tell me, ye seas, whose waves roll and ripple at our feet or thunder on our vessels, tell me, have ye seen the airy stranger float along your surface, and whither has it winged its way?

Tell me, ye winds, harpers of the mountain forest; methinks ye could, for there are times ye whisper gently, and seem as if ye were holding communion with departed spirits; tell me, have ye seen this airy stranger, and whither has she gone? Tell me, ye dazzling worlds, that perform your regular but mystic dance upon the airy surface; tell me, have ye seen this airy stranger wing her way through your aerial canopy; and whither has it gone?

Such thoughts as these followed the first anguish at losing her, and to all these inquiries one answer seemed to come back to me from all Creation—

"The body returns to the dust, and the soul to God who gave it."

And when I compared this answer with my own conduct, I felt I was far behind; and over my sweetheart's grave I vowed to amend my life, that one day I might hope to meet her again. The first three days after the funeral I tried in every direction for an honest situation.

The fourth I fell from all my good resolutions.

In my despair I had recourse to drink, and was undone. I was drunk for a whole week, and by the end of that time was penniless.

Let mankind take warning by my fate, and not fancy the habit of drink can be formed with safety. Up to this time, though like all the world I had wasted a large portion of my gains upon drink, yet I had never gone at it like a madman. But what of that? the habit was formed; it was there waiting like a lion for its prey, waiting for a great opportunity, your reverence. One came: I was in despair; my appetite was gone, and drink comforted my stomach; my heart was dead, and drink made it beat. I had recourse to this solace, and became a beast. As I said before, for a whole week I was never not to say sober.

No man and no woman is safe that has once formed the fatal habit of looking to drink for solace, or cheerfulness, or comfort. While the world goes well they will likely be temperate; but the habit is built, the railroad to destruction is cut ready for use, the trains are laid down, and the station-houses erected, and the train is on the line waiting only for the locomotive. Well, the first great trouble or hopeless grief is the locomotive: it comes to us, it grapples us, and away we go in a moment down the line we have been years constructing like a flash of lightning to the devil.

I woke one afternoon sober and penniless.

From drunkenness to thieving is not a very wide leap even to those who are beginning an evil career; to me it was no more than crossing a gutter. I pawned my watch, and got on board the steamer for London, and back to my old haunts.

I soon fell in with an old pal, and borrowed £10 of him, and began first to pass and after that to coin "shoffle"; and, when that was not quick work enough, took to house-breaking and shop-lifting again.

But in the early part of this chapter

of my career, having very little cash, for part of the £10 went for clothes, I was obliged to be moderate in my expenses, and I accordingly spent a week in a lodging-house kept by an old friend of mine, which I will try to describe.

The house itself is divided into two separate compartments besides the bedchambers.

The first or state apartment is for professional thieves.

The back room is for those street trades that lie between thieving and commerce.

My friend ushered me in here, and there were more than a score of them all gazing with their mouths open at the new-comer—all engaged at various labors, and talking a dozen different branches of cant.

Some were making mats—some arranging articles for sale in their baskets or on their trays—some making matches—the "askers" selling their begged bread at three halfpence the pound—another tuning up his fiddle—the whole lot comparing notes to the detriment of the public—the beggar telling the match-maker at what house they gave him meat or money—the hawker and mat-maker exchanging the same sort of profitable information, by which many an easy-going gentleman, that thinks himself obscure, gets his habits published among the dregs of society, and perhaps a nickname tacked on to him, and more people knowing him by it than know him by his own.

Then there was the "buzzer" practicing his necromancy. Presently in came a "sneaker" with half a firkin of butter for sale at 4*d.* per pound, on which the women fell to abusing their men because they had not enough money to buy ten or twelve pounds; children crying, and all in a mighty way because the fountain is not boiling.

In the corner was a handsome young female, evidently a stranger, biting the end of her apron-string, her mind not being able to comprehend the fullness of the scene.

"Here is a sweetheart for you and all," said my friend. "She is waiting for her husband to come back," added he, winking to me.

Her husband, as she called the man who had enticed her from her friends, never came back, and, indeed, nobody except herself ever thought he would.

Then, to amuse her mind, I requested her to go an errand for me. She agreed. I gave her a base sovereign, and sent her to buy groceries, which when she had done I invited her to take tea with me, and over our tea she told me her story without reserve.

Finding she was a decent girl, and apparently had never made but this one slip, I determined to enter into partnership with her, if she would consent.

Strange as it may appear, I felt the want of a female companion now in a way I never had until Miss B.'s death. I believe my nerves were shaken by that sad event, and I began to want to see a woman's face opposite me, and to hear the soft notes of a female voice.

Three days after our first meeting we were married according to the custom of the house—*i. e.*, a traveler dressed in a white sheet, with holes cut for his arms, read a few sentences of the marriage service to us; he then drew a line on the floor with a piece of chalk, and made us leap over it in succession while

he recited in a solemn voice the following:

"Leap, rogue; and follow, jade—
Man and wife for evermore,"

which concluded the ceremony, and we were man and wife in the eyes of all the lodgers, unless we should agree to be untied, which could only be done by the same party or his successor, and with other ceremonies, and, above all—fees! We soon left this house and set up a lodging of our own. She made me very comfortable when I was at home, and I let her want for nothing.

I lived nearly three years in London this bout, and, owing to the company I kept, I got the cockney phrase and twang so that I fear I will never entirely get rid of them. Indeed, I am commonly taken for a cockney, which is a sad disgrace to a man born north of the Tweed.

At the end of this time my wife's friends sent to beg her to come home, which she asked my leave to do. I consented, and we were untied, and parted with mutual expressions of esteem. Finding London rather dull after she was gone, I agreed to join a gang of us that were about to make a provincial trip.

We went to Mortimer, a village in Berkshire. The scene of our business was Reading and its neighborhood. We committed some very daring robberies in Reading and Caversham, that will not soon be forgotten.

We broke into one house in Reading in open day: it was Sunday, and the whole family were gone to church. We rifled the house, and left a paper on the table, on which I am ashamed to tell your reverence I wrote

"Watch as well as pray!!"

But this could not last forever. I had been out fishing all day (a sport I am very fond of), when, returning toward dusk, I saw a strange face at one of the windows of our house.

Not quite understanding this, I turned back and went a mile round, to where I could see the back of the house without being recognized, and my caution was not wasted.

I soon found that the house was in the possession of the police, and that all or most of my comrades were nabbed.

Having some money about me, I decamped, and, returning to town, found two of my companions about to start for California, dazzled by the accounts we heard of the fortunes made there by digging and levying the roadside tax on those who dug.

I joined them, and after a voyage of six months we landed at San Francisco.

Your reverence has often heard me talk of my adventures in that country, and you have often forbade me to be always thinking and talking about gold; I will, therefore, abstain from relating my adventures in the New World—in fact, they would of themselves fill a volume. Suffice it to say, I had at one time twelve hundred pounds in money and gold-dust, but I wasted the greater part, and by a just retribution was robbed of the rest.

I returned to London with £10 and a nugget, which I sold for £25 in Threadneedle Street.

And now, not liking the smoke of

London, after one or two successful jobs, which swelled my stock to a matter of £60, I bought some new clothes and went down to Reading, but, not thinking it prudent to remain there long, crossed the river and went into Oxfordshire.

I heard of a farmer who sometimes took a lodger, and as I was well dressed, and he too honest to be suspicious, we soon came to terms.

The farmer was George Fielding, of whom your reverence has often heard me speak.

I never met with such a character as his: he did not seem to know any thing about lying, far less taking any thing without paying for it.

When I first lodged with him I had, of course, an eye to business, but I got so fond of him I could not take any thing of his; and he was attached to me too, until one unlucky day he found out my real character, and then he insulted me, and now he despises me.

I spent four innocent months here, and I often thought, if I could have such an honest man as George Fielding always close to my side all day, I could keep from taking any thing all the rest of my life; but, unluckily, my money gradually melted, in which state I went to a fair in the neighborhood. I saw a rich farmer take out some notes and make a payment, and put the rest back into a side-pocket: almost before it reached the bottom of his pocket it was mine.

The country banks close at three o'clock, and it was near four at the time; I got rid, therefore, of the Bank of England notes, meaning to change the others when a good opportunity should occur.

But meantime I suppose measures were taken against me; any way, the police came down from London, and I was seized, identified, and put to an open shame.

This, the last passage of my life, went nearer to drive me to despair than all the rest; for I had begun to taste the sweets of innocence, and to love honesty under the name of George Fielding.

I was convicted at the Assizes, and being recognized as having been seven times in prison, and notoriously guilty of many felonies besides, they sentenced me to twelve months' imprisonment, and transportation for ten years.

I have been six months in this jail, where I have met with most cruel treatment, being forced to labor beyond my strength even when weakened by sickness, and punished for mere inability; and, besides the harm this wrought my body, it hardened my heart, and made me look on mankind as my enemy.

But, after that, your reverence was sent here by Heaven to our relief.

It was my good fortune to find you a gentleman whose heart was large enough to feel for all who suffer, and whose understanding could comprehend that a convict is a man, and this has been a godsend to me, and may the Almighty bless you for all your goodness, and above all for your constant battle to save us poor fellows' souls, and, when you stand one day at the great tribunal, may many a black sheep stand round you that the world perhaps took for goats to the last!

Well, sir, when I look back upon my past life, of which what I have written here is no more than a single page out of volumes and volumes—when I think

of the many opportunities I have had of doing good to myself and others, and then think of how it all ends—a convicted felon, doomed to pass the remainder of my life in shame and exile, debarred from situations where I could execute my talents, and felon printed upon me, I am whiles tempted to put the gas-pipe that is in my cell into my mouth, and suck the poisonous vapor into my lungs, and thus with crime to end a life of crime. But then your face rises up before me, and expostulates with a look, and bids me be patient and hope; also your words, that I ought to be thankful to God for his mercy in giving me time to reflect on the enormity of my crimes, and not cutting me down as cumberer of the ground.

But, above all, I feel it would be ungrateful to you and grieve you if I was to make away with myself under your eye, or even to despair.

I will try my best to be somebody yet, if only for your reverence's sake; for it is a shame a gentleman like you should give his days and his nights, and all the blood in his heart, to saving us poor fellows from perdition, and be continually disappointed.

So once more thanking your reverence for all kindness, and for setting me to write this, which has amused and whiled away some weary hours, and begging you to excuse all faults and blunders, for in my busy life writing is an art I have had no time to give my mind to, I close this record of the disgraceful past, and here in my cell, envying the cripple round whom the free air plays and on whom the sun shines, I await the gloomy future.

Thomas

—*alias* Wilkinson,
—*alias* Lyon,
—*alias* M'Pherson,
—*alias* Scott,
—*alias* Howard,
—*alias* Robinson.

Queen Zemrouda

FADLALLAH, the son of the mighty monarch Bin-Ortob, succeeded on the decease of the latter to the throne of the kingdom of Mousel. He was still in the flower of his days, was intelligent, and even more good-natured than clever, so that in a short time he acquired the entire affection of his subjects. He was in particular commended for the filial tenderness he displayed towards his widowed mother, the Queen Zemrouda, devoting himself, in every way he could imagine, to her happiness, and to shed light and pleasure over the evening of her days. Upon ascending the throne, instead of dooming her to a widowed solitude, as formerly had been the custom, he left her in possession of the same royal honours and the same splendid establishment which she had enjoyed during the late sultan's life. He even took a vow that he would never raise a new queen to the same rank until he had erected a splendid palace for his future consort, so as not to deprive his queen-mother of the least portion of her pres-

ent possessions, or subject her to the slightest inconvenience.

The young monarch, possessing a great taste for the arts and sciences, as well as esteeming their professors, bestowed liberal encouragement upon men of letters, numbers of whom quickly resorted to his court. He had sufficient discrimination, however, to distinguish between those who possessed no useful talents or endowments, whom he soon dismissed, and those whose sound principles and knowledge entitled them to his patronage.

A young dervise at length appeared at his court, whose singular penetration and acquirements, whose wit and personal accomplishments attracted the attention and won the admiration and affection of all ranks. He became the constant topic of conversation, and always of applause. It could not fail at length to reach the ears of the monarch, whose curiosity led him to wish for a personal interview, the dervise not having taken a single step to recommend himself to his patronage. He summoned him, therefore, to his presence; the dervise obeyed, and appeared to such great advantage in point of intellectual endowments, of such noble principles, united to so many accomplishments and such address, as even at a single interview to win the royal favour. King Fadlallah admired and esteemed him, declaring that in this instance report had no way flattered the object of its applause. He entreated of the young stranger that he would frequently visit him; while the latter availed himself of the invitation with so much modesty and discretion as to remove every suspicion of interested motives for his return, and so great was the progress made in Fadlallah's good opinion by his superior character and conversation, that he appeared always dissatisfied if he had not conversed with him in the course of the day. He at length attached him wholly to his court, retained him as much as possible near his person, and by degrees succeeded in availing himself of his talents for the public service. In a short time the king conferred upon him the highest office in the state. This the dervise repaid by observing the strictest fidelity and affection; though he refused to receive this last proof of his kindness, declaring with great modesty that he was unequal to it, and that he had moreover taken a vow to refuse office, inasmuch as he preferred his freedom to the highest honours and to the most enormous wealth.

The king was astonished at his moderation, and from this time forth regarded the dervise as his first friend and favourite. Once as the dervise was accompanying the king to the chase, he entertained his master with an account of his travels and many singular adventures. Their conversation at length turned upon India, and when the dervise had related several very extraordinary events that had occurred there, he concluded by saying that in the same country he had become acquainted with a certain venerable old brahmin, one who had penetrated into some of nature's secrets. "He died in my arms," continued the dervise, "and with his last words communicated to me one of his rarest secrets, under the express condition that I would never confide it to any other mortal."

Surely, thought the king, this must be the grand art of making gold; and

then his refusal to accept the highest office in his kingdom directly occurred to him: this suspicion he communicated to his friend.

"No, my noble master," replied the latter, "it is something far more wonderful: it is the secret power of again restoring a deceased body to life by a migration of my own spirit." Just at that moment a roe was observed bounding past them, and the king, who was prepared to fire, brought it down by a shot through the heart. "There," he said to the dervise, "you have now an opportunity of displaying your power." "You seem to doubt it," returned the dervise, "but I will soon convince you of its truth;" and this he pronounced in a very deep and earnest tone. At the same time he fell down dead, and the next moment the roe sprang up, as lively and well again as ever. It bounded towards the king, played a thousand pretty tricks, displaying its attachment to him in every way it could, and then fell lifeless upon the grass, while the dervise on his side got up again.

Fadlallah was lost in delighted astonishment as he beheld this strange transaction, and then he entreated the dervise, by everything that was sacred, to impart to him the nature of the secret. At first the latter made many objections, assuring the king that there was nothing he would not willingly encounter to promote the pleasure of his noble patron, holding his own life light in the balance; yet he could hardly venture to break the sacred vow he had made the old brahmin, and he trusted his majesty would excuse him. This only induced the monarch to make fresh and more urgent entreaties, so as at length to convince his favourite that there was nothing which he ought to refuse to so great a prince, and particularly a secret that some time or other he would himself most probably communicate to a third person.

The monarch, however, must consent to take a binding oath to preserve a strict silence in regard to the affair, upon receiving which the dervise taught him two cabalistical words, which were not to be pronounced above the breath, for fear of destroying the potent charm of which he had just given so lively a proof.

The king was full of impatience to put his knowledge into execution upon the spot, although the dervise appeared as if he wished to dissuade him. But he spoke the dreadful wonder-words that he had learnt, and suddenly he found his soul inspiring the dead body of the roe. The dervise here gave him little time to consider the nature of the metamorphosis, for he treacherously took possession of the lifeless form of the monarch, and the same moment seizing the weapon of his master, he would have levelled it at the roe, had not the king, aware of his design, suddenly concealed himself in an adjacent thicket.

Rejoicing in his successful villany, the dervise proceeded in the outward semblance of Fadlallah towards the capital, and shortly he found himself seated upon the king's throne. No one suspected the cheat; even Fadlallah's own mother received her supposed son with her usual tenderness, though it was a little more difficult on the part of the dervise to counterfeit an affection he did not feel, for the expression of a pure and virtuous heart can-

not by any art or hypocrisy be imitated. The false king excused the absence of the dervise by saying that he had been greatly deceived in him, that he was by no means the wise man he took him for, and that being engaged in an argument with him, he (the king) had not concealed his opinion of him, upon which the dervise had left him in a huff, declaring that he would never more submit to any of the king's commands from the moment he should reach the frontiers.

This invention obtained credit throughout the whole court, for there were many who had been jealous of the dervise's influence with the monarch, and were rejoiced to think that he had incurred the royal displeasure. All tongues were now loud in their aspersions of him, insomuch that the dervise, in the king's shape, had an opportunity of hearing the real but by no means flattering opinion entertained of him at court. He resolved to avenge himself at a fit opportunity; but at present he had more important business to occupy his attention, namely, to secure possession of the throne which he had thus treacherously obtained. For this purpose he issued a royal edict to all his subjects for the speedy destruction of all the roes throughout his dominions, each being entitled to a handsome reward for every one that should be taken.

The real king would infallibly have been destroyed, as coming within the operation of this act, had he not luckily avoided his impending fate by escaping into the corpse of a deceased nightingale, which he found at the foot of a tree.

In this transformation he flew as fast as possible towards his capital of Mousel. He had a great curiosity to learn in what way the treacherous dervise was proceeding, as well as once more to behold his dearly-beloved mother. He took his station, therefore, upon a tree directly opposite to the queen's chamber, over which it cast a cool delicious shade. Here he poured his sweetest song; but so mournful withal were the strains he poured, that the princess sat enchanted for hours at her window listening to him. But it sadly grieved him to think that she had not the least suspicion of the cause, and that so far from feeling any degree of compassion, she only amused herself along with her slaves in praising the compass of his notes. Still he ceased not, both morn and eve, to pour his tender song, until the queen, on the approach of a colder season, fearful lest she might lose her little musical guest, gave orders to have him, if possible, secured.

The transformed monarch heard the whole of this from his perch on the bough, and when the queen's bird-catcher appeared, to secure him by some sleight of hand, he sat quite still and quietly permitted him to take him. For the unhappy king wished for nothing so much as to avail himself of this occasion to approach nearer his affectionate mother. So the bird-catcher then presented him to the queen, contained in a costly cage, and he received a high reward. She soon ordered a still more splendid residence for him, constructed of the finest gold wire, beset with rubies, emeralds, and sapphires, besides other precious materials, being resolved to guard him with the utmost care and tenderness.

As she now put her hand into the cage in order to transfer him to his new abode, he not merely permitted her to take him without the least chirrupping or flutter, but looked into her face with so soft and musical an expression, pecked and billed her hands so very affectionately, that, finding him so tame, the queen held him more gently than before, when he fluttered round her face and neck, and seemed so delighted that the queen was quite overjoyed with her little feathered guest.

She placed the cage on a marble slab, leaving the door ajar, so that the king was at liberty to fly in and out when he pleased, still continuing his flattering kisses and caresses. She listened hours together to his song, played with him in a thousand little ways, and pronounced him the sweetest pretty favourite she ever had.

The poor king felt very happy in thus still being made the object of her love; and it was only when his treacherous foe, the wily dervise, made his appearance in his stolen body, and when he lavished his hypocritical attentions upon the queen with affected filial respect, that he felt as if a dagger went to his heart. And though his indignation was all in vain, he could not refrain from sometimes betraying it by biting at his fingers when he touched him, striking with his little wings, and uttering the most sharp and lamentable notes, at which the queen and her supposed son appeared much amused.

In addition to her nightingale, however, she had another favourite in her apartments, which had been presented to her when she was only twelve years of age. It was a lap-dog, and from that time it had never been absent from her side: a very faithful little creature, but it was very old, very cross, and very ill. And alas! one morning the princess found it lying dead upon its cushion near her bed, whence it had hitherto always sprang to salute her in the morning. This was a cruel blow to the queen: she could not conceal her grief, and declared her fixed determination to have the little dog stuffed. so as to be enabled to keep him still near her.

All this was communicated to our royal dervise, who instantly waited upon the queen in order to console her on her loss. In the meantime, however, the real king had availed himself of this occurrence to leave the body of the bird, and take possession of that of the lap-dog, in order to please his mother by bringing her favourite back to life.

When the dervise entered the queen's apartment he found her, to his infinite astonishment, playing with the pretty little dog, frisking about as usual. In great glee she acquainted him that as she was lamenting over the little fellow just before, and stroking him for the last time, he jumped up and began to bark, caressing her as if nothing had happened. "Indeed," she continued, "I think I never should be comforted for the loss either of my pretty lap-dog, or of my sweet nightingale, that pours such delightful songs." Saying this, she looked up, and what a sight! she beheld her nightingale stretched lifeless at the bottom of his cage.

The extravagance of her grief was now greater than for the loss of her dog, and she refused to be comforted. The dervise, irritated at these lamenta-

tions, and forgetting for a moment the part he was playing, reproached the queen sharply for this morbid sensibility; a weakness, he said, the less excusable as she must know that all that lives must some time die; and he added mockery to his reproaches. "Strange," he continued, "that she, who had been deprived of a consort whom she ought to have loved infinitely more than these senseless animals, could have consoled herself for her loss, and yet waste her foolish lamentations over them."

The queen, unaccustomed to such language from her affectionate son, now wept more bitterly than ever, and persevered in her lamentations and reproaches so long that the dervise became alarmed at having thus inconsiderately assumed his natural character, and sought to make the matter up. But he had gone too far, and all his endeavours were now in vain. "Well, well," he suddenly exclaimed, as a last resource, "I will do what I can to lighten your grief. Every morning your nightingale shall come to life again, and sing as much as you please."

The queen looked at him with an air of surprise, and did not conceal her doubts. In fact, she fancied her son had suddenly run mad.

"What I have promised you," insisted the dervise, "shall be done, were it only to convince you that mine are no empty words." So forthwith he laid himself down upon the sofa, and sent his soul into the nightingale, which, to the no small astonishment of the queen, began to flutter about and sing as exquisitely as before.

The real king in the form of the dog was a spectator of this scene, and availed himself of this opportunity to take possession of his own body, which he did the moment the wily dervise left it. He then sprang off the sofa, ran to the cage, and seizing the nightingale by the neck, wrung it till it was dead.

"Madman!" cried the queen, transported with anger at the deed; "what is it you do? Is this your affected kindness and respect for your mother, a mother who has lavished upon you so much care and tenderness?"

It was now King Fadlallah proceeded to inform her respecting everything which had passed, in consequence of the treachery of the dervise. The queen was the less inclined to question the truth of what he stated, as she recollected a variety of little circumstances, which, though not before noticed, now corroborated it. In particular the decree issued against the roes, and the account she had received of the dervise's body being found half devoured by the wolves under a tree in the wood. Thus, after a short reign of power and splendour, the traitor received the just reward of his deeds, having betrayed the utmost ingratitude and baseness towards the best of masters. All his infernal arts were insufficient to screen him from the hand of that justice which is dealt out equally from on high.

The Gypsy's Prophecy

I DON'T remember what day of August in the year 1816 it was that there came to the doors of the captain-general of Granada a certain ragged and uncouth gypsy, seventy years of age, by trade a sheep-shearer, by name Heredia, astride of a lean and shambling black donkey whose whole equipment consisted of a halter about its neck. The man, immediately on dismounting, said:

"I want to see the captain-general."

Needless to say such presumption awoke in turn the resistance of the sentinel, the laugh of the orderlies, and the doubt and hesitancy of the *aides-de-camp,* before he was brought to the notice of the Most Excellent Señor Don Eugenio Portocarrero, then captain-general of the ancient kingdom of Granada; but as that dignitary was a man of kindly disposition, and already knew of Heredia, renowned for his tricks, his bargains, and his love for his neighbour's goods, order was given to let the gypsy enter.

Once within the office, he fell on his knees, exclaiming, "Blessed be Mary, Most Holy, and long life to your honour, ruler of this little world."

"Get up and leave off ceremony and say to me what you have to tell," replied the count with seeming severity.

Heredia at once drew a long face, and said, "Well, my lord, I have come that the thousand *reales* may be given me."

"What thousand *reales?*"

"Those offered a few days ago by proclamation to anyone bringing information about Parrón."

"Indeed! You knew him, then?"

"No, sir."

"Well?"

"I know him now."

"How?"

"Very simply; I tracked him, I saw him, I bring the information, I claim the reward."

"Are you sure you have seen him?" said the captain-general, with an interest that overcame his doubt.

The gypsy burst out laughing, and said: "It's very evident that your honour thinks 'this gypsy is like them all, and wants to cheat me.' May God never forgive me if I lie! I saw Parrón yesterday."

"But do you realize the importance of what you are saying? Do you know that for years we have pursued this monster, this bloody bandit, whom nobody knows or has ever seen? Do you know that every day, in different parts of the *sierra,* he robs wayfarers and then shoots them, for, as he says, dead men tell no tales; and by this means only has he escaped being brought to justice? Finally, do you know that to see Parrón means death?"

The gypsy laughed again, and said: "Doesn't your honour know that what a gypsy cannot do, no one on earth can? Does anyone know when our laughing or crying is real? Does your honour know a fox as tricky as we are? I repeat, general, that not only have I seen Parrón, but I have talked with him."

"Where?"

"On the road to Tózar."

"Give me proof."

"Listen, your honour! Yesterday morning, eight days since, my donkey and I fell into the hands of some robbers. They bound me fast, and led me through some bewildering hollows till we came to the clearing where the bandits camped; a cruel suspicion laid hold on me. 'Can these be Parrón's people?' I was constantly asking myself; 'If so, there's no remedy, for this devil has decreed that eyes that have seen his face shall never see another.'

"While I was thus cogitating, there approached me a man, strangely but elegantly dressed, who, slapping me on the shoulder, said, 'Friend! I am Parrón!'

"To hear this and fall backward was one and the same thing. The bandit burst out laughing. I arose, trembling, fell on my knees, and cried out in every tone of voice I could muster, 'Blessed be thy soul, king of men! Who would not have known thee by the princely bearing God has given thee! May there be mothers to bear more such sons! Let me kiss you, my son! May this little gypsy die in torment if he was not wishing to meet you and tell your fortune, and kiss your lordly hands. Behold me at your service. Do you want to know how to trade dead donkeys for live ones? Do you want to sell your old horses for the price of young ones? Do you want to teach French to a mule?' "

The Count of Montijo could not suppress a laugh. Then he asked, "And what said Parrón to all this; what did he do?"

"The same as your honour, he laughed with all his might."

"And you?"

"I my lord, laughed too, while tears as big as oranges ran down my cheeks."

"Proceed!"

"Presently he held out his hand to me, and said, 'Friend, you are the only man of talent that has fallen into my power; all the others have had the bad taste to annoy me by weeping and wailing and the like nonsense, which puts me into a bad humour; you, alone, have made me laugh, and if it were not for these tears——'

" 'What? Good Lord, they are for joy!'

" 'I believe it. Devil knows it's the first time for six or seven years that I have laughed; truth is, I haven't wept either. But let us hasten. Eh, boys?'

"For Parrón to say this, and for me to be surrounded by a ring of blunderbusses was quicker than a wink. 'Lord, have mercy on me!' I began to screech.

" 'Halt!' cried Parrón. 'We are not ready for this yet. I called you to find out what you took from this man.'

" 'A donkey with his hide on.'

" 'Any money?'

" 'Three *duros* and seventy *reales*.'

" 'Now, then, leave us alone,' and they all withdrew.

" 'Now, tell me my fortune,' said the robber, extending his hand to me. I took hold of it and thought a moment. I knew I was in a position to speak freely, so I said to him, with all the conviction of my heart: 'Parrón, sooner or later, whether you take my life or leave it to me, you will die on the gallows!'

" 'I know that already,' answered the bandit, with perfect calmness. 'Tell me when!'

"I began to consider. This man,

said I to myself, is going to free me; tomorrow I'll be in Granada, and peach; the next day they'll take him; then the trial will begin. 'Do you ask when?' I said, aloud. 'Then, take notice, it will be during next month.'

"Parrón shuddered and so did I, fearing my love of fortune-telling would be my death.

" 'Look you, gypsy,' replied Parrón, very deliberately, 'you will remain in my power, and if by the end of next month they do not hang me, I will hang you, as sure as they hanged my father. If I die by that time, you will go free.'

" 'Much obliged,' said I to myself, 'to pardon me after death,' and I repented for having made the time so short. We stayed at the aforesaid camp, and I was locked up in a cave, while Parrón mounted his mare and took the track through the bushes."

"All right," said the Count, "I understand, Parrón is dead; you are free; and therefore you know his whereabouts."

"Quite the contrary, my general! Parrón is alive! And now comes the blackest part of my story.

"A week passed without the captain coming to see us, and, as far as I could make out, he had not shown himself in the neighbourhood since the evening I told his fortune; a thing not at all extraordinary, as my guards told me. For, do you know, the chief goes to hell occasionally, and doesn't return till it suits him. The fact is, we know nothing whatever of him during these long absences. About this time, by force of entreaty, and having told the fortunes of the band, prognosticating freedom from hanging and comfortable old age for all, I had succeeded in getting them to take me out of the cave, evenings, and bind me to a tree, for I was smothering with heat in the cell. Needless to say, there was a pair of watchers continually at my side.

"One evening, about six o'clock, the robbers who had been on 'duty' by command of Parrón's lieutenant returned to camp, bringing with them a miserable reaper, forty to fifty years old, manacled, and crying fit to break one's heart. 'Give me back my twenty *duros!*' he said. 'Ah, if you only knew what it cost me to earn them: a whole summer's reaping in the sun! A whole summer away from wife and children! and so I scraped together by my toil and self-denial this sum, that we might live this winter, and that on reaching home I might embrace them, and pay the debts the unfortunate ones have contracted, so that they might live. Ought I to lose this money, which is a fortune to me? Pity, gentlemen! Give me my twenty *duros* for the sake of the most Holy Mary of Sorrows!'

"A mocking laugh answered the plaints of the old man. Bound as I was to the tree I shook with horror! For gypsies, too, have families.

" 'Don't be a fool!' finally said a bandit, going to the reaper. 'You do wrong in thinking of money when more important matters should occupy your thoughts.'

" 'How?' said the reaper, not supposing there could be a greater misfortune than his children going without bread.

" 'You are in Parrón's hands.'

" 'Parrón? I don't know him—never heard of him; I come a long

way; I belong in Alicante, and was reaping in Sevilla.'

"'But, my friend, Parrón means death. Everyone that falls into our hands must die; therefore, make your will in two minutes, and your peace with God in the next two. Make ready! Aim! You have four minutes.'

"'I am going to improve them. Hear me for pity's sake.'

"'Speak.'

"'I have six children and one unfortunate—widow, I will say, since I must die, for I read in your eyes that you are worse than wild beasts—yes, worse—for beasts of the same species do not destroy each other. Oh! pardon! I know now what I say. Gentlemen, some one of you must be a father! Is there not a father among you? Do you know what it is to have children starving all winter? Do you know what it is for a mother to see the children of her blood die, crying, "I am hungry; I am cold"? Gentlemen, I don't want to live without them; for what would life be to me?—a chain of toil and privation. But I must live for my children's sake—oh, my children, children of my heart!'

"The father dragged himself along the ground and turned his face to the robbers. Such a face! It seemed like one of those saints that King Nero threw to the tigers, as the preachers say. The robbers felt something stir within their breasts; then they looked at one another, and, seeing all were of one accord, one made bold to say—"

"What said he?" asked the captain-general, deeply affected by the story.

"He said, 'Comrades, what we are about to do must never be known to Parrón.'

"'Never! Never!' muttered the rest of the bandits.

"'Go thy way, good man,' said another, almost weeping, and I made signs to the reaper that he should instantly go.

"'Quick! March!' they said, and all turned their backs. The reaper held out his hand beseechingly.

"'Aren't you satisfied?' growled one. 'Do you want your money, besides? Go! Go! Do not try our patience!'

"The poor father went away weeping, and soon was out of sight.

"Perhaps a half hour later, which was taken up by the bandits swearing one another not to tell the captain they had freed a man, there suddenly appeared Parrón, leading the reaper alongside his mare.

"The bandits fell back astounded. Parrón dismounted, leisurely, unslung his two-barrelled carbine, and aiming at his comrades said. 'Fools! Idiots! I know not why I do not shoot every one of you! Quick! give back to this man the twenty *duros* you took from him!' The robbers produced the money and gave it to the reaper, who cast himself at the feet of the bandit chief who had so kind a heart.

"Parrón said to him, 'By the peace of God! without your directions I never should have found them. Now, you see you mistrusted me without cause. I have fulfilled my promise—you have your twenty *duros*. Now be off!'

"The reaper kissed him again and again, and departed full of joy; but he had gone hardly fifty paces when his benefactor called him anew, and the poor man hastened to retrace his steps.

"'What is your command?' said he, anxious to do a service to him who had restored happiness to his family.

"'Do you know Parrón?' asked the man himself.

"'I know him not.'

"'You mistake,' said the chief, 'I am he!'

"The reaper stood stupified. Parrón brought his carbine to his cheek and fired both barrels at the reaper, who fell rolling on the ground.

"'May you be accursed,' were the only words he spoke. During the terror that blinded me, I felt the tree to which I was bound quiver slightly, and knew my bonds were loose. One of the balls after having wounded the reaper, hit the cord which held me fast, and cut it. I concealed my freedom and waited a chance to escape. Meantime, Parrón, pointing to the reaper, said to his men, 'Now you can rob him. You pack of idiots! you lot of fools! to free this man that he might go as he did, howling along the highway! Fortunately it was I that met him, and learned what had happened, for had it been the soldiers, he would have shown them the way to this camp, same as he did to me, and we would all have been in prison by this. See the result of robbing and not killing; but enough of preaching, bury this body before it rot.'

"While the robbers were digging a grave, Parrón was lunching, with his back to me. Little by little I moved from the tree, and slipped down into a hollow nearby. It was already night, and shielded by the darkness, I set out with all haste. By the starlight I found my donkey, who was quietly feeding, tied to an ash-tree. I mounted him and never stopped till I got here. Therefore, my Lord, give me the thousand *reales*, and I will put you on Parrón's track, who, by the by, has kept my three-and-a-half *duros*."

The gypsy, having given a description of the bandit, afterward received the promised reward, and departed from the general's office, leaving the count and a person then present, from whom I had these details, utterly confounded. It remains to be seen whether Heredia guessed aright when he foretold Parrón's destiny.

Fifteen days after the scene we have just described took place, about nine in the morning, a large crowd of idlers attended the assembling of two companies of soldiers in the streets of San Juan de Dios and part of that of San Felipe, in the aforesaid capital city, who, about a half-hour later, were to set out in quest of Parrón, the description of his hiding-place, his person, and his comrades having finally been approved by the Count of Montijo. The interest and excitement of the public was extraordinary, and none the less so was the soberness with which the soldiers took leave of families and friends before starting on so important an expedition, such fear had Parrón aroused throughout the old kingdom of Granada.

"Seems we are ready to fall in," said one soldier to his comrade. "But I don't see Cabo-López."

"That's strange, too, for he was always on hand first of any when there was talk of hunting Parrón. He hated him with all his heart."

"So, don't you know what has hap-

pened?" said a third one, joining in the talk.

"Hello! this must be our new man. How do you like our company?"

"Very well, indeed," answered the one inquired of, a man of pale complexion and fine shape, which was partly hidden by the uniform.

"What were you saying?" asked the first.

"Ah yes! Cabo-López is dead," replied the pale-faced one.

"Manuel! What are you talking about? This can't be. I, myself, saw López this morning, surely as I see you now."

He called Manuel coolly said "Half an hour ago Parrón killed him."

"Parrón! Where?"

"Right here in Granada. They found López's dead body on the Dog's Hill."

All kept silence except Manuel, who began to whistle a patriotic air.

"Eleven soldiers gone in six days," said a sergeant. "Parrón means to exterminate us! But how comes it that he is in Granada? Aren't we going to look for him in the Sierra-de-Loja?"

Manuel ceased whistling, and said with his usual recklessness, "An old woman, who saw the deed, says, that since he killed López, she hopes if we look for him we may have the pleasure of seeing him."

"Comrade! aren't you pretty bold to speak of Parrón with such contempt?"

"Well, is Parrón more than a man!" asked Manuel with a shrug.

Just then "Fall in!" was shouted by various tongues. The two companies formed and roll-call was begun.

Now it happened that at the moment Heredia was going by, and, like everyone else, stopped to admire the soldiery.

It seemed as if Manuel, the new soldier, gave a start, and fell back a little so as to hide behind his comrades, when Heredia caught sight of him, gave a yell, and, jumping as if he had stepped on a viper, started to run up San Yeronimos Street.

Manuel raised his musket and aimed at the gypsy, but another soldier was quick enough to strike the gun up, and the shot was spent in the air.

"He's crazy! Manuel has gone mad! A soldier has lost his wits!" was shouted in succession by the lookers-on, and officers, sergeants, and countrymen fell on the man, who was struggling to escape, and whom, after they had subdued him, they plied with questions, accusations, and insults which drew from him no response whatever. Meantime, Heredia had been seized by some passers-by, who seeing him running and hearing the musket-shot, took him for a malefactor.

"Lead me to the captain-general," said the gypsy; "I must speak to the Count of Montijo."

"Count of Montijo, indeed! Whom have you killed?" asked his captors. "Here comes the guard and they'll know what to do with you."

"I think so, too," said Heredia, "but be careful not to let Parrón kill me."

"What do you mean by Parrón? What's the man talking about?"

"Come and you will see," and, so saying, the gypsy made them take him to the commandant of the platoon, and pointing to Manuel, he said: "Commandant, this is Parrón, and I am the gypsy who two weeks ago gave a de-

scription of him to the Count of Montijo."

"Parrón! Parrón is taken! A soldier proved to be Parrón!" shouted the crowd.

"No doubt about it," said the commandant, reading the order given him by the captain-general. "We certainly have been very stupid; but who would have thought of looking for the robber chief among the very soldiers that were searching for him?"

"Fool that I am," Parrón was saying to himself, regarding the gypsy with eyes like a wounded lion's. "He is the only man to whom I ever granted life. I deserve what has happened."

The week following, Parrón was executed, and so the gypsy's prophecy was literally fulfilled.

The Black Imp

THERE arrived one fine summer evening in the city of Venice, the far-famed commercial queen of Italy, a young German merchant of the name of Reichard, a joyous and spirited boon companion. This happened at the time when almost all the German states were disturbed by the Thirty Years' War, and on that account the young merchant, who longed for a pleasant journey, was not a little rejoiced that his business led him for a season into Italy, where wars were not so frequent, and where, as he had heard, he should find the richest wines and the most delicious fruits, to say nothing of the women, whose beauty is so justly celebrated.

The first thing he did on his arrival was to hire a gondola, and he soon became immersed in all the gaieties of Venice, and found no want of companions to share his festivities. Day after day passed in reiterated pleasures, and in the society of a set of joyous comrades, all of whom evinced the utmost hilarity during their carousals, one only excepted. This was a Spanish captain, who was indeed a partaker in all the sumptuous entertainments that Reichard gave to his friends, but he was observed seldom to exchange a bow with any one, and a settled gloom, from some cause or other, seemed at all times to pervade his countenance. The company, however, never reproached him with this, as he was a person of rank and character, and was moreover accustomed frequently to defray the whole expense of their nightly banquets.

Notwithstanding this latter circumstance, and that the young merchant became more sparing in his hospitality than he had been on his first arrival in Venice, still his money began to fail, and he saw with no little uneasiness of mind that a course of life so licentious and extravagant must soon come to an end, and his money all be expended.

As his case was no uncommon one to his comrades, they only laughed at his disconsolate situation, and passed their jokes on his downcast looks, while at the same time they joined together in consuming the small remainder of his means. It was at this time that the Spanish captain one evening kindly

drew Reichard aside, and entering into a friendly conversation with him, led him into an unfrequented spot in the suburbs of the city. The young merchant felt no little uneasiness at this proceeding, but, thought he, my comrade knows he has nothing to expect from me but my skin, and that might cost him more trouble than it is worth.

But the Spanish captain, seating himself on the ruins of an ancient and mouldering castle, motioned the young merchant to him, and thus addressed him: "It appears," said he, "my much-esteemed young friend, that you are deficient in a quality which to me is become almost a burden. I mean the power of possessing at any one moment as large a sum of money as you could wish, and of repeating this as often as you please. Now, this privilege, and many other things to boot, I will dispose of to you for a very reasonable sum."

Reichard on hearing this avowal said with surprise, "What wish, then, can you have for money from me, when you thus throw away the power of possessing it at will?"

"The case is this," said the Spanish captain. "I know not whether you are acquainted with a certain little creature which they call a Mandrake. It is a very diminutive black-looking imp, enclosed in a phial. Whoever possesses one of these creatures may by its means obtain whatever is most desirable in life, particularly an unbounded quantity of money. In return the Mandrake requires the soul of the possessor for his master Lucifer, provided he dies without having transferred the Mandrake into other hands. This can only be done by selling it, and that too for a smaller sum than the possessor himself has given for it. Mine cost me ten ducats, and if you will give me nine for it, 't is yours."

Whilst the young Reichard was considering this proposal within himself, the Spaniard thus continued his speech: "It would be an easy matter," said he, "for me to deceive any person with this glass and pass it off as an article of another kind, as indeed happened to myself, who received it at the hands of an unprincipled merchant. But I wish to keep a clear conscience, and therefore make this honourable and open proposal to you. You are yet young and capable of enjoying life, and will have opportunities sufficient to rid yourself of the thing, in case it should become burdensome to you, as it has done to me."

"Excuse me, sir," answered Reichard again, "I hope you will not take it amiss, but I am very much on my guard, from the number of times I have been cheated since I arrived in this same city of Venice." "How now, young fool!" said the Spaniard in an angry tone; "you need only recollect the feast of last night, and then reflect for a moment whether it was worth my while to become a cheat for the sake of nine beggarly ducats."

"Who treats well must pay well," said the young merchant modestly, "and a handicraft only, not a purse, has a golden bottom. As you last night expended all your money, my nine ducats may be very acceptable to you." "You may think yourself well off," said the Spaniard, "that I do not this moment cut your throat. But I forbear, in the hopes that you will rid

me of this little Mandrake." "Will you allow me a trial of it?" said the young merchant with prudent foresight. "How can that be?" said the captain. "I have already explained to you that it will neither remain with nor serve any one who has not previously paid a just price for it."

The young merchant was embarrassed. The darkness of the night and the loneliness of the spot inspired a fear in his mind, although the captain assured him he should not attempt to force the purchase on him, on account of the hard conditions annexed. At the same time all the delights that the possession of the little Mandrake would make him master of floated before his eyes, and he at length resolved to venture one-half of his remaining money in the purchase, first seeing if he could obtain it at a lower rate."

"Thou fool!" said the captain, "it is for thine own benefit and that of those thou mayest hereafter sell it to, that I fix the highest possible price, that it may not be so soon sold for the lowest possible coin, and the purchaser's soul become the property of Lucifer, when he is not able to sell it for a less sum than that at which he bought it."

"Ay, well!" said Reichard, laughing, "I shall not sell the wonderful thing, depend upon it, if you will let me have it now for five ducats." "Even so, for my own sake," said the captain, "although it shortens the little imp's period of service, and brings perdition the sooner on some poor soul or other."

And on this he handed over to the young man, on payment of the purchase money, a small thin glass phial, in which Reichard by the light of the stars could observe a little black object frisking and frolicking about.

He immediately put his new purchase to the proof, and, on wishing for it found the sum he had laid out doubled, and grasped the ten ducats in his hand. He then repaired in high glee to the tavern, where he found the rest of the company still drinking, and all wondered to see their two comrades, who had left them in low spirits, return with such glad countenances. But the Spaniard soon took leave without stopping to partake of a sumptuous supper which Reichard ordered to be prepared, although it was then late in the night, first paying the mistrusted host beforehand, for by aid of the little Mandrake both his pockets were now ringing with ducats.

They whose boundless desires would lead them to possess a charm like the little Mandrake may best conceive what a life of pleasure the young merchant led from this time forth. But a prudent and pious mind will easily imagine that it was highly profligate and licentious. The first thing he did was to attach himself to a former flame, the beautiful Lucretia. He purchased for her a castle and two delightful villas, and procured for her and himself every possible luxury of life.

Now, it happened one day that he sat with his mistress Lucretia in the gardens of one of his country houses, on the bank of a swift-running brook. The time was spent in laughing and jesting, until Lucretia suddenly and unexpectedly seized the little Mandrake, which Reichard kept in his breast fastened to a golden chain. Before he could prevent it she had al-

ready broken the chain and held the little flask against the light. At first she could not help laughing at the frolicsome caperings of the little black imp, but suddenly exclaimed with a cry of affright, "Ah! what a horrid toad!" and flung chain and flask and the little Mandrake all together into the brook, where the rapid stream soon swept it from their eyes.

The unfortunate young merchant endeavored to hide his chagrin, lest his mistress should ask him further respecting it, and might perhaps denounce him to justice for witchcraft. He passed it off, therefore, as a curiosity, and as soon as possible disengaged himself from Lucretia to consider in private what steps were most advisable to take. He still possessed the castle and the two country houses, and he had also a considerable quantity of ducats left in his purse. But how agreeably was he surprised when the first thing he found, on putting his hand into his pocket, was the phial with the little Mandrake! The golden chain indeed was left at the bottom of the brook, but the phial and the little imp were duly returned to their rightful owner. He could not avoid a sudden exclamation of joy. "And now," said he, "I possess a treasure of which no power on earth can rob me!" And he would have pressed the dear little phial to his lips, if the little jumping imp had not looked so grim at him.

But if Reichard had before led an abandoned life, it was now ten times more so. He looked down with pity and contempt on all the potentates and rulers of the earth, convinced that there was not one who could command so many pleasures of life as he. In the luxurious city of Venice no one could count so many rarities of the table as were to be found at his costly banquets. And whenever any moderate man admonished him for his extravagance, "Reichard is my name, and my riches (*Reichtham*) are so boundless that no expense in the world can exhaust them." And he would often laugh at the Spanish captain in an extravagant manner, for having parted with so invaluable a treasure, and for having afterwards, as was reported, retired into a monastery.

But all things on earth endure only for a season, and this truth the young Reichard was doomed to experience, and so much the sooner as he abandoned himself to every kind of sensual pleasure. An unconquerable lassitude seized on his exhausted powers, in spite of the little Mandrake, which he on the first day of his illness called ten times in vain to his assistance. No relief, however, came to him, but in the night he was visited by a terrible dream.

It seemed to him as if one of the medicine-bottles at the side of his bed suddenly began to dance, striking with violence all the other phials that surrounded it. On further observation Reichard recognized the phial with the Mandrake, and said, "How now, little Mandrake! dost thou not only refuse to help me, but must break my medicine-phials into the bargain?" But the little Mandrake began to sing in the phial thus:

"Hey! little Reichard, Reichardlein, come,
Be patient, and bear thine eternal doom;

We will find thee plenty of room.
The devil a bit will he help the sick,
'Gainst death avails neither herb nor stick;
Mine thou art, however thou kick."

And he thereon began to grow suddenly long and thin, and, in spite of all Reichard could do, crept out through the pitcher cork and through his fingers, and became a huge black demon, who began a horrible dance flapping his broad bat-like wings, and at length laid his heaving breast on Reichard's breast, and glued his grim face so fast and so close to Reichard's face that Reichard believed he was growing like him, and cried out for a looking-glass. He awoke in an agony of fright and in a cold perspiration, and thought he saw a black toad run with great haste from his breast and hide itself in his bedclothes. He felt in the bed, shuddering, but found only the phial, but he observed the little black imp seemed exhausted and lay dormant.

Alas! what a long night was this to the poor sick patient! He dared not trust himself to fall asleep, lest the black monster should again surprise him, and yet he dared scarcely open his eyes, lest it should be lurking in some corner or other of his apartment. If he closed his eyes for a moment, he imagined the monster had secretly got into his bed, and he sprang up from it in horror. He rang again and again for his servants, but their sleep was not to be broken, and the fair Lucretia since he had been sick was no longer to be seen in his chamber. So he was left all alone to his miseries, which were the more heightened when he thus reflected: Ah, God! thought he, if this night be so long in its duration, how long will be the endless night of hell! He resolved, therefore, if God should spare his life till morning, to rid himself at all risks of the Mandrake.

When morning at length appeared, he felt himself somewhat refreshed and invigorated by the cheerful light, and began to consider whether he had yet turned the Mandrake to all possible advantage. The castle and the villas, with their furniture, did not seem to him sufficient, and he instantly desired a huge heap of ducats under his pillow, and as soon as he found his wishes fulfilled he began to consider where he should find a purchaser for his phial. His physician, he recollected, had a number of natural curiosities preserved in spirits, and he was in hopes to add the little Mandrake to his collection, as an object of that description, well knowing that the doctor was himself a pious man, and would have nothing to say to it in its real shape. He could not indeed conceal from himself that he was playing the poor devil a sad trick; but said he to himself, "Better to incur a small sin that may be washed away in purgatory than to deliver one's self up irrevocably to the devil. Charity begins at home, and my desperate case admits of no delay." Having made this resolve, he straightways carried the little Mandrake to the doctor. It had by this time recovered all its wonted agility, and played a thousand frolicsome tricks in the glass, which attracted not a little the doctor's admiration. He observed it more narrowly, and evinced his desire to become possessed of so singular a *lusus naturæ,* as he termed it, if

the price were not beyond his means. Reichard, in order to satisfy his own conscience to the utmost of his power, put as high a price upon it as he could, and four ducats, two dollars, and twenty groschen was the price he asked. The doctor, however, refused to give more than three ducats, and moreover required a couple of days to consider of it. On this the young man fell afresh into an agony and bloody sweat. He at once renounced the Mandrake, received three ducats in exchange, and immediately distributed them among the poor by the hands of his servants. He, however, concealed the gold that was under his pillow as well as he could, believing that all the prosperity of his future life depended on it.

He had now a second attack of his fever. He lay almost in a state of constant delirium, and if he had not been rid of the burden of the Mandrake would certainly have died through terror. He began at length to recover, and his convalescence was only retarded by his anxiety respecting the ducats which he had hidden under his pillow, but which from the time he first recovered his senses he had looked for in vain. At first he was scrupulous of asking any person respecting them, but when he did he could obtain no tidings of them. He sent to the fair Lucretia, who he believed had visited him in his illness; but she returned for answer that she knew nothing of the matter, and said she supposed from the question that he was still raving. He arose in a melancholy mood, and resolved to convert his castle and villas into money. But to his surprise he found them in the possession of persons who exhibited to him a release for the purchase money under his own hand and seal, for he had in an unlucky hour given the artful Lucretia a *carte blanche*, and saw himself now reduced to poverty, and so straightway packed up his few articles to wander forth a poor beggar. At this moment the physician who had cured him appeared before him with a very grave countenance. "Ah! doctor," cried the young man in tribulation, "I entreat you, as you would become celebrated in your profession, to furnish me with a speedy poison, for I know not where to buy a loaf to save me from starvation." "Do not despair," said the doctor, with a composed aspect; "I will present you with the cost of my attendance. But here is a new medicine which I have enclosed in this box, and which is requisite to strengthen your constitution in future, and for this you must, if you please, pay me two ducats." "With all my heart," said the young merchant, and paid the sum to the doctor, who immediately quitted the room. As soon now as Reichard put his hand into the box he felt the Mandrake phial between his fingers, and a ticket was attached to it with the following lines:

"I wished to cure thy body's smart,
Thou laidst thy snares for soul and heart,
Yet conscience quickly told me true
The wicked scheme you had in view;

So pray leave off your counter-trick,
I hand you back your Mandrake quick:
It likes me ill, this kind of truck—
A gallows imp for gallows luck."

The young Reichard at first shuddered when he found he had again purchased the Mandrake, and that too at a very low price. At the same time he was not without some feelings of joy; and as he was determined to rid himself of it again on the first opportunity, he resolved by its means to revenge himself on his mistress Lucretia, and punish her for her inconsistency and neglect. And this he effected in the following manner. In the first place, he wished to have in his pockets double the number of ducats which he had placed under his pillow, and which in an instant almost weighed him down to the ground. The whole of this large sum he placed in the hands of a neighbouring money scrivener, and took an acknowledgment of it, reserving only to himself one hundred and twenty gold pieces, with which he repaired to the residence of his Lucretia. With her he immediately renewed a life of dissipation, as he had done some months before; and Lucretia, won by the reappearance of his treasures, pretended a revival of her attachment. Reichard one day, when the little Mandrake was playing all kinds of frolicsome tricks in the phial, showed it to his astonished mistress, as the same kind of creature as the one she had formerly thrown into the water, and of which he said he possessed many varieties. With the curiosity natural to women, she was seized with a sudden wish to possess it; and as the crafty young man said he must have gold for it, she thoughtlessly gave him a ducat as its value.

When the bargain was concluded, Reichard straightway left the house, and called upon the money scrivener for a part of the sum he had lodged with him. But he did not replenish his purse in that quarter, for the scrivener, regarding him with surprise, declared he had never seen him before. Reichard now took the receipt out of his pocket, but found, to his great consternation, that it was a naked and blank piece of paper. The scrivener had in fact written his receipt with a prepared ink, of which, after the lapse of a few hours, not the slightest trace was left. The young man thus saw himself again unexpectedly reduced, and would have been a beggar, if he had not happened to have retained ninety ducats, the remains of his prodigality. He that has too short a bed must lie close, and he that has none must lie on the ground; he that has no chariot must ride on horseback, and he that has no horse must travel on foot. So after spending some days in idleness, Reichard saw that in that way his money must soon come to an end, and that from being an opulent merchant he was now reduced to the sorry condition of a poor pedlar.

He therefore looked out for a pack for his goods, and procured another for the remainder of his money. It was with bitter feelings that he now strapped his pack on his shoulders, and offered his wares for sale in the same streets which a few weeks before had witnessed his pride and consequence. He was everywhere well received, and many persons offered him more for his goods than he himself expected. The citizens are very kind, thought he to himself, and if I can continue in this way, a little time will repair my lost fortunes. I will then return home to my native country, and the more happy for having escaped the snares of the

accursed Mandrake, and extricated myself by prudence and caution.

In this happy mood he repaired in the evening to a tavern, and there laid down his boxes. Some of the guests came around him; one of whom, more inquisitive than the rest, said, "What curious thing is that, friend, that you have in the phial, that seems to play so many antics?" Reichard turned round, and now saw, to his great horror, that among some other boxes which he had purchased, he had bought one which contained the Mandrake. He instantly offered it to this man for three groshen, as he had given four for it, and to all around for the same price. But they all viewed the little black imp with disgust, as he did not inform them to what purpose it might be applied; and as he was incessant in crying his poor wares, and interrupted their conversation, they at last turned the hapless pedlar, with his boxes and his little black imp, out of doors.

He then repaired in great trepidation to the man who had sold him the casket, and offered him back the little Satan for a small sum. But the man was going to bed, and said he recollected nothing of the business, but that if he wished to return the odious phial to its original possessor, he must send it to Lucretia, who had sold him this with some other toys; and so bade him a good night.

"Happy man!" sighed Reichard deeply, "that canst thus sleep in peace!" As he was near crossing the great square to go to Lucretia's house, he thought he heard something rustling behind him, and ready to leap on his neck. He rushed forward in affright, and entered Lucretia's apartment by a well-known secret door. His shameless mistress was seated amidst a company of new admirers. At first they exclaimed at the rudeness of the pedlar. The company then bought nearly the whole of his goods for Lucretia, who now recognized him, and indulged her mirth at his ridiculous appearance. None, however, would purchase the Mandrake; and as he offered it to them once more, "Away with the loathsome toad!" said Lucretia; "I have already had it in my possession, and sold it for some groschen to a beggarly pedlar like this, who persuaded me to give him a ducat for it." "As you value your good fortune," said the young merchant in an agony, "you know not what you throw away, Lucretia. Let me speak with you alone for five minutes, and I will warrant you will to a certainty purchase the phial."

She accordingly stepped on one side with him, and he then discovered to her the wonderful properties of the Mandrake. But she began forthwith to exclaim, "Do you take me for a fool, you dissolute vagabond? If what you say were true, you would have wished something better from Satan than this box and these straps. Away, or I will denounce you as a sorcerer, and have you burnt at the stake in spite of all your boasting."

The two lovers of Lucretia, in order to please their mistress, then fell on the terrified young man, and thrust him downstairs, so that, what with rage at this treatment and the apprehension of being burnt as a wizard, he made all haste to quit the city of Venice. By noon next day he had passed beyond the territories of the state, and then stood on the borders, execrating the

city as the source of all his misfortunes. In the violence of his gesticulations he happened to snatch the little Mandrake out of his pocket. "Now, you good-for-nothing wretch," said he, "I will speedily turn you to account, and that too to get rid of you the sooner."

And he immediately wished for himself an untold sum of gold, still greater than the last, and so holding his pockets he secretly approached the best city that offered itself. He then purchased a splendid equipage, hired servants, and proceeded on his journey in pomp and magnificence towards Rome. He there felt assured he should be able to rid himself of the little Mandrake amidst such a crowd of men of various desires and manners. As often now as he expended his ducats he took care to replenish his purse by the Mandrake, in order that when he sold the phial he might have the whole sum undiminished. This seemed to him only a just compensation for the anxiety which he suffered; for not only was he persecuted by the visits of the horrible fiend in the night, but he also saw that the little Mandrake danced so madly in the phial that he now considered his prey as almost certain, and the expiration of his imprisonment as near at hand.

His riches and his liberal expenditure had no sooner introduced him among the best society in Rome than he began to seek an opportunity of selling the Mandrake. He invariably offered it to every person he met for three groschen, German money, and soon became the laughingstock of the community. Gold, however, makes friends. He everywhere met with a warm reception on account of his riches; but as soon as he began to speak of the phial and the three groschen, German money, people smiled at him and got out of his company, so that he sometimes said, "I might as well sell myself to the devil altogether, for people think I more than half belong to him already."

A despair so terrible at length seized on him that he could no longer stay in Rome, and he resolved to seek his fortune in war, and to see if he could not by that means rid himself of the Mandrake. He heard that two Italian states were engaged in hostilities, and so earnestly prepared himself to take part with one or the other. Provided with a beautiful cuirass bordered with gold, a superb hat and feather, two choice light muskets, a well-tempered and brilliant sword, and two highly ornamented daggers, he rode out of the gates mounted on a fine Spanish horse, followed by three well-armed attendants on noble steeds.

We may well imagine that a cavalier so gallantly armed, and moreover willing to serve without pay, would meet with a welcome reception in any camp. The brave Reichard was immediately appointed to a company, and now led the life of a gallant soldier, and was as happy as his anxiety from possessing the Mandrake and the persecuting nightly dreams would let him be. Instructed by his ill success in Rome, he was now cautious in pressing on his friends his merchandise. Indeed, he did not mention the matter to any of his comrades, in order the more unexpectedly to conclude a bargain with them on some day or other.

One fine morning a firing was heard from the neighbouring hills. The officers who were at play with Reichard threw down their dice, and instantly the

trumpets sounded to horse throughout the camp. Every one being now mounted and falling into order, they proceeded towards the foot of the hills. There they saw the infantry on both sides already engaged, and the enemy's cavalry coming down on the plain. Reichard's spirits were excited, and his high-mettled charger pawed the ground and neighed, and the leaders gave the word of command, and the trumpets sounded. A squadron of the enemy's horse advanced against them to intercept them, but were routed immediately, and Reichard, with his brave followers, were not the last to pursue. But suddenly they heard a strange whistling in the air—many horses fell. It was heard again, and a knight and his horse were overthrown, and lay, struck by a cannon-ball, in their blood. Reichard now thought he should be safer with the larger body, when to his surprise he found it close behind him advancing to attack the cannon. The brave young soldier held his place for some time, but when he saw the shot falling thickly around him, and a large body of the enemy's cavalry approaching with drawn swords, "What folly is this," he said to himself, "to be found here! for I am still more likely to meet my death than in a sick-bed, and if one of those accursed whistling balls hit me, I am the Mandrake's and the devil's for ever." And he had scarcely uttered these words before he turned round his Spanish horse, gave him the reins and the spur, and fled to a neighbouring wood.

He pushed his horse forwards under the high trees until he stood still, exhausted. He then dismounted, unbuckled his cuirass and his armour, took off his horse's bridle and saddle, and said as he threw himself on the grass, "I must think no more of fighting as long as I have this little Mandrake in my pocket." He then began to consider what course he should take, but soon fell into a deep slumber.

After some hours' quiet sleep, a whispering as of men's voices and a sound like approaching steps came upon his ear. He was, however, heedlessly composing himself to fresh slumbers, when a thundering voice cried out, "Wretch, art thou dead or alive? Speak, before this powder be wasted on thee." He now opened his eyes, and saw a musket presented to his breast. He that held it was a fierce-looking soldier, who with his comrades stood around him, having already seized his horse and accoutrements. Reichard cried out for quarter, and entreated in the greatest agony that if they were determined to shoot him, they would first buy from him a phial in the right-hand-side pocket of his waistcoat.

"What a strange fool!" cried one of the soldiers; "buy it I shall not, but shall take it nevertheless!" and so immediately seized the Mandrake and put it in his breast. "In God's name," said Reichard, "if you would keep the creature you must buy it, otherwise it will not stay with you." The soldiers laughed, and withdrew with the horse and other plunder, without troubling themselves further about Reichard, whom they thought to be mad. He, however, felt in his pocket, and there found the Mandrake safe as usual. He then called out to them and showed them the phial. The soldier who had carried it off put his hand in his breast,

and not finding it, ran back and took it afresh. "I tell thee," said Reichard, agitated, "it will not stay with thee by these means; give me but the smallest farthing for it." "Yes, yes, Mr. Conjuror," said the soldier, laughing; "but don't think to rob me in that manner of my hard-earned money," and running after the others, he held the phial carefully in his hand. On a sudden, however, he stopped and cried, "The devil! 'tis gone again." As he was looking for it in the grass, Reichard again called to him, "Come back again, for here it is again in my pocket." When the soldier saw this, he now first conceived a real desire of possessing the Mandrake, which now as usual when it changed hands seemed full of play and frolic, for by these means it knew its servitude was drawing nearer to an end.

The three groschen seemed to the soldier too much, on which Reichard impatiently cried out, "Well then, niggard, since you so wish it, let it be a bargain; give me then one and take your purchase." And so the bargain was concluded, the money paid, and the little Satan transferred. Whilst the soldier stood still to examine and laugh at the creature, Reichard was reflecting on his future destiny. He stood there with a light heart indeed, but light pockets also, and without a prospect of any good employment; for he could not venture to return to the squadron where he had left his servants, arms, horses, and money. At one time he felt ashamed of his dastardly flight, and at another he thought he might perhaps be pursued as a deserter. It then occurred to him that he might join the troops to which these soldiers belonged. From their discourse he had found that they served the opposite party, where nobody would know him, and he felt well enough disposed, now that he was rid of his Mandrake and all his gold, to venture his life for a good booty. He therefore made an offer which was accepted, and he departed with his new comrades to their camp.

The commander did not hesitate to engage a tall active well-grown young man like Reichard, and he now lived for a considerable time henceforth as a soldier. But he was oftentimes not a little dejected in his mind. Since the last battle the armies on both sides remained inactive, as negotiations were pending between the hostile states; there was indeed no danger of being killed, but at the same time there was little opportunity for booty and plunder. The soldiers were obliged to live quietly in their camp on their small pay and their poor rations. Now, it happened that many of the soldiers had enriched themselves by spoil in the late campaign, while Reichard, once so caressed by fortune, was almost the only one among them who lived like a beggar. He naturally soon became weary of such a life, and one day as he received his small monthly pay (too small to procure any pleasure and too much not to attempt something with), he resolved to repair to the sutler's tent, and there try whether the dice would not be more favourable to him than commerce and war had hitherto been.

The game took its usual checquered course, and the wine passed freely round till late in the night, when at last all the dice seemed to conspire against the half-intoxicated Reichard.

His pay was staked and lost, and no one would now give him credit for a halfpenny. He now felt in all his pockets, and as he there found nothing, he felt at last in his cartridge-box, but there met with nothing but his cartridges. These he drew forth and staked them in play, and as the dice were falling saw that his opponent was the same soldier who had bought from him the Mandrake, and by whose aid his antagonist was certain to win. He would have called halt, but the dice fell and decided the cast in favour of his opponent. He departed to his tent, muttering curses as he went against his bad fortune. One of his comrades, who had lost his money, but was more sober than he, took him by the arm. This man asked Reichard by the way whether he had got a stock of cartridges in his tent. "No," said the enraged Reichard; "if I had any more stuff I should try my luck again." "Then," said his comrade, "you must prepare some, for if the commissary comes to examine and finds a soldier without cartridges, he will order him to be shot forthwith." "That were a bad case," said Reichard with an oath, "for I have neither cartridges nor money." "Well," said his comrade, "the commissary will not come before next month." "Ho! that is well," said Reichard; "before then I shall have my pay again, and can buy cartridges enough." On this they bade each other good night, and Reichard began to sleep off the fumes of his wine.

He had not, however, lain long, when the corporal called out, "Holla! a muster in the morning, and the commissary will be in camp at break of day!" Reichard was by this suddenly roused out of his sleep. The cartridges came across his half-inebriated senses, and he anxiously inquired of his comrades in the tent if no one would lend him some, or sell him some on credit. They, however, all called him an idle drunkard and bade him go back to his bed. In the greatest apprehension of being shot in the morning, he sought again through all his clothes for money, but could find no more than five farthings. With them he ran from tent to tent in the dark night to purchase cartridges. Some laughed, others swore, but no one complied with his wishes. At last he came to a tent where he heard the voices of the soldiers who had the day before won the cartridges from him. "Comrade," said Reichard, touchingly, "you must help me or none. You yesterday took from me all I had, and in the morning if the commissary finds no cartridges by me he will order me to be shot, and you will have my death at your door. Then for God's sake lend me some, or borrow, or sell me some." "I have made an oath against giving and borrowing," said his comrade, "but to get rid of thee I will sell thee some. How much money have you left?" "Five farthings," answered Reichard sorrowfully. "There, then," said the soldier; "and that you may be convinced that I am a good-natured fellow, I will give you five cartridges for your five farthings, but now begone, and leave me and my tent in quiet." He reached him the cartridges out of the tent, and Reichard gave him the money, and then slept in peace till morning.

The muster-roll was called, and Reichard passed by means of his five cartriges. Towards noon the commissary

departed and the soldiers withdrew to their camp. But the sun shone so intolerably hot that Reichard's comrades repaired to the sutler's tent, whilst he himself remained sitting with a piece of dry bread in his hand, sick and fatigued with the exercise of the day. "Alas!" said he, "that I had but one of all the ducats I have so lavishly and so foolishly expended!" And he had scarcely expressed this wish, when he found a bright new ducat in his left hand. A thought of the Mandrake instantly shot through his mind and embittered the joy which he felt at the sight of the golden ducat. At this moment his comrade who had sold him the cartridges came in haste into his tent. "Friend," said he, "the phial with the little black tumbler, the one you remember which I bought from you in the forest, is escaped from me, and I may perhaps have by accident given it to you for a cartridge, for I lapped it in paper and laid it among my cartridges." Reichard looked carefully in his cartridge-box, and in the first folded paper he found the small phial. "Now, that is well," said the soldier; "I would not willingly lose the thing, though it looks so disagreeable, for it seems to me as if it always brought me good luck. There, comrade, take back thy farthing, and give me the creature." Reichard cheerfully granted his request, and the soldier returned rejoicing to the sutler's tent.

But the poor Reichard was very miserable since he had seen the Mandrake again; nay, and had it in his hands, and carried it about with him. In every folding of the canvas he thought he saw it smiling at him, and that it might probably strangle him in his sleep. Although he was in want of refreshment, he threw away the ducat he had wished for, and as he thought the Mandrake might possibly conceal itself in his tent, he rushed out in the evening and sought a thick shady wood, where he fell down exhausted with fear and fatigue. "Alas!" said he, "that I had but a cantine with water to quench my thirst!" And instantly a cantine with water stood by him. First, after looking at it with much longing, he asked himself where the cantine could come from. The Mandrake then crossed his mind, and he anxiously felt in his pocket, and finding the phial there, he fell into a fit of terror and into a deep sleep. During his sleep he was visited by the same horrible dreams as before, and the Mandrake seemed to grow larger and longer, and to lay itself grinning on his breast. He was about to remonstrate with it, as it did not now belong to him, but the Mandrake said with a hollow laugh, "You bought me for a farthing, and you must sell me for something less, else the bargain is void."

He then looked upwards with affright, and thought he saw again the shadow retiring to the phial in his pocket. Half bewildered, he hurled the phial down a precipice, but found it instantly again in his pocket. "Alas, alas!" he cried, "once it was my joy and my treasure that it was always returned to me, out of the water or out of the deep; now it is my torment, my eternal torment!" And he began to run through the dark wood, and struck himself against the trees and the stones, and heard at every step the phial rattling in his pocket.

At break of day he arrived at a beautiful cultivated plain. He was very

heavy at heart, and he began to hope that all was nothing more than a disordered dream; and perhaps the phial in his pocket might be no more than a common one. He drew it out of his pocket and held it against the morning sun, and there to his horror he saw the little black Satan dancing between him and the joyful light, and stretching out its misformed arms towards him like a pair of tongs. He uttered a loud shriek and let it fall to the ground, but the next moment again heard it rattling in his pocket. His only chance now was to procure a piece of money below the value of a farthing, but he inquired in vain, so that he began to lose all hope of selling the horrible dwarf, who now soon threatened to become his master. He would no longer ask anything from the detestable little imp, and his anxiety deprived him of all exertion, so that he was obliged to beg his way all through Italy. While he looked so distracted, and moreover was always asking after half-farthings, every one took him for a madman, and called him the crazy half-farthing man, under which name he was known far and wide.

It is said that the kite sometimes pounces on the roe, and buries its talons in its neck, while the poor animal runs madly through the brakes struggling in vain to escape from its fiendlike enemy. So it happened to poor Reichard with the satanic imp in his pocket, and as it would excite your compassion too strongly to relate all his misery, I will say no more of his long and helpless flight, but tell what befell him after the lapse of several months.

He had one day wandered to the side of a wild mountain, and seated himself sorrowful and silent by a little stream that pursued its course through the tangled brakes, and seemed to wish to soothe him by its gentle murmurs. Suddenly the tramp of a horse was heard on the adjoining rocks, and a tall, black, wild-looking horse, bearing on his back a man of gigantic figure in a blood-red gorgeous dress, approached the place where Reichard sat. "Why so sorrowful, friend?" said the stranger, addressing the wretched and despairing youth; "one would suppose thou wert a merchant and had bought something at too high a price."

"Too low, alas! on the contrary," said Reichard, with a feeble trembling voice.

"So I believe," said the stranger, with a horrible laugh; "and have you ever such a thing as a Mandrake to sell? or am I mistaken when I conjecture you to be the mad half-farthing man?"

The young man scarcely dared to allow his assent to this question escape his pallid lips, expecting every moment that the rider's cloak would expand with blood-dropping wings, and that his horse would turn into a black monster, snorting flames of fire, and bear him, a poor miserable wretch, to the mansions of eternal torment.

But the rider said in a milder tone and with less horrible gesture, "I see for whom you take me, but be comforted, I am not that person. On the contrary, I may perhaps help you out of his clutches, for I have now been seeking you for some days past in order to purchase your little imp from you. You have indeed unhappily given too little for it, and I myself am not acquainted with a coin of a lower de-

nomination. But listen and attend to my words. On the other side of yonder mountain there dwells a valiant young prince: to-morrow morning I will send against him a horrid monster, as soon as I have separated him from his followers in the chase. Remain thou here till midnight, and depart just as the moon appears over yonder rock, and pursue thy way along the dark ridge to the left—delay not, hasten not—and thou shalt come to the spot at the very moment when the wild beast has the prince under his claws. Attack the monster without fear, and he will flee and straightway plunge into the sea; then beg as a favour from the grateful prince that he will order some half-farthings to be coined for you, give me two in exchange, and for one of them will the little imp be mine."

So spoke the grisly horseman, and, without waiting for an answer, rode slowly off into the forest.

"But where shall I find thee, when I have got the half-farthings?" cried Reichard after him. "At the Black Fountain," said the stranger: "any child can tell you where it is;" and with measured and gigantic steps the swarthy steed departed with his dark master.

He that has lost his all at play has nothing more to risk. Reichard, therefore, in his despair resolved to follow the advice of the grim horseman.

The night approached, and the red moon appeared over the pointed rock. The young man then arose and proceeded along the cliff. He pursued his solitary way in the dark, except that now and then a moonbeam would glance through the cleft rocks. Reichard here felt no desire to loiter, and he could not hasten his speed: he determined to comply as far as in his power with the horseman's request, and resolved not to lose the thread which seemed to lead him to light and hope.

After some hours the distant light of day began to beam on his dark path, and the fresh morning breeze fanned his face; but just as he was ascending from the deep path, and beginning to enjoy the sight of the forest and the blue waves of the sea that lay stretched out before him, he was alarmed by a dreadful shriek. Looking round, he saw a young man in a hunter's dress already under the fangs of an infuriated wild beast. Reichard's first impulse was to run to rescue him; but when he looked at the monster again and saw that it resembled a horrible and furious ape, and bore huge horns on its head, his courage forsook him, and he had nigh, in spite of the pitiable cries of the young man, hid himself again among the rocks; but the words of the horseman now occurred to his recollection, and, animated by the fear of eternal perdition, he ran and attacked the apish monster with his club. The beast had already clasped the hunter in his arms, and now threatened to gore him with its horns; but when Reichard approached, he let his prey fall and ran off with a horrible gibbering, Reichard pursuing him, till he cast himself from a precipice into the sea and disappeared under the waves.

The young man now ran back in triumph to the rescued hunter, who declared himself to be the sovereign prince of the country, and called his protector a valiant hero, requesting him to demand from him, as an acknowledgment, anything in the world that it

was in his power to grant. "Are you really in earnest," said Reichard, rejoicing, "and will you pledge your princely honour to grant my request?" The prince confidently assured him that he would to the utmost of his means. "Then," said Reichard, with tears of joy, "then for the sake of Heaven, coin me a pair of half-farthings."

As the prince stood looking at him in amazement, some of his followers came up, to whom he related all that had happened, and one of whom immediately recognized Reichard for the crazy half-farthing man, whom he had formerly seen. The prince now began to laugh, while the poor Reichard clasped his knees in agony, imploring him to keep his word, as he should inevitably perish if he was denied the half-farthings. But the prince replied, still laughing, "Arise, friend, I give you my princely word that I will have as many half-farthings coined as you can wish for. At the same time, if farthings of one-third value are as convenient, there needs no mint for them, for my neighbours declare my farthings are so light, that three of them generally pass for one or more of another state." "If that were absolutely certain!" said Reichard, doubting. "At any rate," said the prince, "you will be the first that has found them too good; but, if that should happen, I here give you my solemn word to coin you worse, if that indeed be possible."

And he forthwith ordered one of his servants to deliver to Reichard a bushel of his farthings. Reichard ran like one possessed to the borders, and became wild with joy, when he found in the first tavern on the road that it was with grumbling and hesitation that any one would exchange a common farthing for the princely ones which he had selected for the experiment.

He now inquired for the Black Fountain, but the children in the tavern, who heard him, ran off in affright. The host himself told him, not without shuddering, that this was a haunted spot, frequented by evil spirits, and which few persons had ever seen, but that he knew it well. The entrance was not far distant, through a cave, with two withered cypresses before it, and no one could miss the way that ventured in; from which God prevent him and all good Christians.

Reichard now became very sorrowful again, but resolved to exercise his courage for the last time, and so commenced his way. The cave appeared horribly dark, even at a distance; the two cypresses seemed withered through horror of the hideous gulf, which discovered, as Reichard approached, a wonderful stone in its lap. He saw a number of grim visages peeping out, some of which bore a resemblance to the apish monster on the shore; but when examined, they were merely oddly-formed pieces of rock. The young man entered on his way with trembling. The Mandrake in his pocket felt heavier at every step, as if it would have drawn him back; but his courage on this account increased the more, as he well knew their different interests. At last the cave became so dark that he could distinguish no more of the horrid forms. He now felt his way carefully before him with a staff, lest he should fall into some hidden abyss, but he found nothing but soft moss under his feet; and if it had not been for a

strange whistling and croaking, he would have been exempt from all fear.

At length he emerged, and found himself in a wild mountain basin. On one side he saw the huge grisly black steed of the horseman, unharnessed, and standing with his head aloft, motionless, like some brazen colossal statue. Opposite there gushed a well from the rocks, in which the horseman was washing his head and hands. But the evil stream was dark as ink, and made everything it touched as black as itself; for when the gigantic figure turned towards Reichard, his hideous face was as black as a Moor's, which formed a horrid contrast to his red dress. "Fear not, young man," said the grisly figure, "this is one of the ceremonies I am obliged to observe to please the devil. Every Friday I am bound to wash myself here in contempt of Him whom you call Creator; and so to my sorrow when I require a new dress I must heighten the crimson of my coat with drops of my own blood, and 'tis this indeed which gives it so rich a colour. Moreover I have bound myself, body and soul, in such a manner that I have no chance of escape; and what think you the niggardly miser gives?—a hundred thousand gold pieces the year. With that I can never get free, and wish for that reason to purchase thy Mandrake. And that I do to play the old curmudgeon a trick; for he has my soul already, and so the little satanic imp will return to hell without gaining anything after his long service, which will make the old dragon mad with rage." And with this he laughed, that all the rocks resounded, and startled the huge black steed, that seemed hitherto motionless. "And now," said he, turning himself to Reichard, "have you brought your half-farthings, comrade?" "No comrade of yours," retorted Reichard, half trembling and half offended, opening his purse. "Nay, do not give yourself airs," said the giant bargainer; "who was it that set the wild beast on the prince, and enabled you to conquer him?" "All your sorcery went for nothing," said Reichard, and related how the prince was accustomed to coin not only half-farthings, but even pieces of less value.

The red man seemed angry at having thus given himself so much unnecessary trouble about the monster. He then received three base farthings for one good one, gave Reichard one of them, and received in exchange the little black imp, which was very heavy as he was drawn out of his pocket, and lay gathered up dejected and melancholy at the bottom of the phial. The purchaser again burst into a loud laugh, and exclaimed, "That will not at all help you now, Master Satan—gold! gold! as much as my black steed can walk under!" and immediately the giant's steed groaned under a huge burden of gold. He then received his master on his back, and walked away in the same manner that a fly ascends the walls, straight up the steep rocks, but with such horrible gestures and dislocations that Reichard fled in all haste out of the cavern to be rid of the sight.

It was not until he had emerged on the other side of the mountain, and had nearly got out of the jaws of the abyss, that a joyful feeling of his liberation first came over his spirits. He now felt a confidence in his heart that he

had expiated his first great errors, and that in future no Mandrake could attach itself to him. He lay down on the green grass for joy, caressed the flowers, and bade the sun a joyful good morning. His mind now recovered its accustomed hilarity, but divested of his former bad passions and affections. And although he might with great justice boast of having circumvented the devil, he never indulged in such self-praise. On the contrary, he devoted his renewed strength to honourable exertions, and attached himself to a pious and respectable course of life. And in this he succeeded so well, that after some years' hard labour he was enabled to return to his native country in the character of a substantial merchant. He there took a wife, and was accustomed in his old age often to relate to his grandchildren and great grandchildren the tale of the Mandrake as a useful warning to them.

Cromwell's Pickpocket

A MOST notorious fellow was the son of one Cottington, a haberdasher of small wares in Cheapside; but his father, being a boon companion, so wasted his substance that he died so poor as to be buried by the parish. He left fifteen daughters and four sons, the youngest of whom was *Mulled Sack*. At eight years of age he was, by the overseers of the parish, put out apprentice to a chimney-sweeper of St. Mary-le-Bow, to whom he served about five years; and having then entered his teens he thought himself as good a man as his master: whereupon he ran away, as thinking he had learnt so much of his trade as was sufficient for him to live upon, and his heirs forever.

He had no sooner quitted his master than he was called by the name of Mulled Sack (though his real name was *John Cottington*), from his usually drinking sack mulled, morning, noon, and night. To support this extravagant way of living he took to picking pockets, and carried on this profession with great success; and among others he robbed was the Lady Fairfax, from whom he got a rich gold watch, set with diamonds, in the following manner:—"This lady used to go to a lecture, on a week-day to Ludgate church, where one Mr. Jacomb preached, being much followed by the precisians. Mulled Sack observing this, and that she constantly wore her watch hanging by a chain from her waist, against the next time she came there he dressed himself like an officer in the army; and having his comrades attending him like troopers, one of them takes off the pin of a coach wheel that was going upwards through the gate, by which means it falling off the passage was obstructed, so that the lady could not alight at the church-door, but was forced to leave her coach without, which Mulled Sack taking advantage of readily presented himself to her ladyship, and having the impudence to take her from her gentleman-usher, who attended her alighting, led her by the arm into the church; and by the way, with a pair of keen or sharp scissors

prepared for the purpose, cut the chain in two and got the watch clean away, she not missing it till sermon was done, when she was going to see the time of the day."

After many narrow escapes from being taken in the act of plundering. Mulled Sack was at length detected in the act of picking the pocket of Oliver Cromwell, as he came out of the Parliament-house, and had like to have been hanged for the fact; but the storm blowing over, he was so much out of conceit with picking pockets, that he took up another trade, which was robbing on the highway; and following this practice with one Tom Cheney, they were audacious enough to rob Colonel Hewson, at the head of his regiment, when marching into Hounslow; but being quickly pursued by some troopers which lay in that town, Cheney's horse failing him, he was taken, while Mulled Sack got clear off. Cheney, desperately wounded, was brought prisoner to Newgate; and shortly after, when the sessions came on, at the Old Bailey, he would have avoided his trial by pleading weakness, and the soreness of his wounds: but this had no effect upon the court, for they caused him to be brought down in a chair; from whence, as soon as he had received sentence of death, which was about two o'clock in the afternoon, he was carried in a cart to Tyburn, and there executed.

Mulled Sack, having thus lost his companion, was resolved in future to rob on the highway himself alone, though he kept company with the greatest highwaymen that were ever known in any age; and such was his genius, that by their conversation he became as expert a robber on the road as any man whatever: for, whilst he followed that profession, he got as much money as all the thieves then in England. He always went habited alike, and was reputed a merchant, for he constantly wore a watchmaker's and jeweller's shop in his pocket, and could at any time command 1000*l.*

Having notice by his spies that the general-receiver at Reading was to send 6000*l.* to London, by an ammunition-waggon and convoy, he prevented that way of carriage by conveying it up himself on horseback, breaking into the receiver's house at night-time, and carried off the booty undiscovered. The loss being so great, strict inquiry was set on foot, when it was discovered that Mulled Sack was the principal in the robbery; whereupon he was watched, waylaid, apprehended, and sent down prisoner to Reading, and from thence, at the assizes, conveyed to Abingdon; where, not wanting money, he procured such a jury to be empanelled, that though Judge Jermyn did what he could to hang him, there being very good circumstantial proof, as that he was seen in the town the very night when the robbery was committed, yet he so baulked the evidence, and so affronted the judge—by bidding him come off the bench, and swear what he said, as judge, witness, and prosecutor too, for so perhaps he might murder him by presumption of evidence, as he termed it—that the jury brought him in guiltless.

He had, however, not been long at liberty before he killed one John Bridges, to have the more free egress and regress with his wife, who had kept him company for above four years; but the deceased's friends re-

solved to prosecute the murderer to the uttermost. He fled beyond sea; and at Cologne he robbed King Charles II, then in his exile, of as much plate as was valued at 1500*l.*; then flying into England again, he promised to give Oliver Cromwell some of his Majesty's papers which he had taken with his plate, and discover his correspondents here; but not making good his promise, he was sent to Newgate, and receiving sentence of death, was hanged in Smithfield-rounds, in April, 1659, aged fifty-five years.

A Chinese Adventure

By the side of a lake in a distant province of the Empire of China, stood one of the imperial palaces of pleasure, seldom visited, and almost in ruins. Hither in one of his moody periods of repose from war, came the conqueror Yuentsoong, for the first time in years separated from his faithful brother prince, Szema. In disguise, and with only one or two attendants, he established himself in the long, silent halls of his ancestor Tsinchemong, and with his boat upon the lake and his spear in the forest, seemed to find all the amusement of which his melancholy was susceptible. On a certain day in the latter part of April, the emperor had set his sail to a fragrant south wind, and reclining on the cushions of his bark, watched the shore as it softly and silently glided past, and the lake being entirely encircled by the imperial forest, he felt immersed in what he believed to be the solitude of a deserted paradise. After skirting the fringed sheet of water in this manner for several hours, he suddenly observed that he had shot through a streak of peach-blossoms floating from the shore, and at the same moment he became conscious that his boat was lightly headed off by a current setting outward. Putting up his helm, he returned to the spot, and beneath the drooping branches of some luxuriant willows, this early in leaf, he discovered the mouth of an inlet, which, but for the floating blossoms it brought to the lake, would have escaped the notice of the closest observer. The emperor now lowered his sail, unshipped the slender mast, and betook him to the oars, and as the current was gentle, and the inlet wider within the mouth, he sped rapidly on, through what appeared to be but a lovely and luxuriant vale of the forest. Still those blushing betrayers of some flowering spot beyond extended like a rosy clue before him, and with impulse of muscles swelled and indurated in warlike exercise, the swift keel divided the besprent mirror winding temptingly onward, and, for a long hour, the royal oarsman untiringly threaded this sweet vein of the wilderness.

Resting a moment on his oars while the slender bark still kept her way, he turned his head toward what seemed to be an opening in the forest on the left, and in the same instant the boat ran, head on, to the shore, the inlet at this point almost doubling on its course. Beyond, by the humming of bees and the singing of birds, there should be a

spot more open than the tangled wilderness he had passed, and disengaging his prow from the alders, he shoved the boat again into the stream, and pulled round a high rock, by which the inlet seemed to have been compelled to curve its channel. The edge of a bright green meadow now stole into the perspective, and still widening with his approach, disclosed a slightly rising terrace clustered with shrubs, and studded here and there with vases; and farther on, upon the same side of the stream, a skirting edge of peach-trees loaded with the gay blossoms which had guided him hither.

Astonished at the signs of habitation in what was well understood to be a privileged wilderness, Yuentsoong kept his boat in mid-stream, and with his eyes vigilantly on the alert, slowly made headway against the current. A few strokes with his oars, however, traced another curve of the inlet, and brought into view a grove of ancient trees scattered over a gently ascending lawn, beyond which, hidden from the river till now by the projecting shoulder of a mound, lay a small pavilion with gilded pillars, glittering like fairy work in the sun. The emperor fastened his boat to a tree leaning over the water, and with his short spear in his hand, bounded upon the shore, and took his way toward the shining structure, his heart beating with a feeling of interest and wonder altogether new. On a nearer approach, the bases of the pillars seemed decayed by time and the gilding weather-stained and tarnished, but the trellised porticoes on the southern aspect were laden with flowering shrubs, in vases of porcelain, and caged birds sang between the pointed arches, and there were manifest signs of luxurious taste, elegance, and care.

A moment, with an indefinable timidity, the emperor paused before stepping from the green sward upon the marble floor of the pavilion, and in that moment a curtain was withdrawn from the door, and a female, with step suddenly arrested by the sight of the stranger, stood motionless before him. Ravished with her extraordinary beauty, and awe-struck with the suddenness of the apparition and the novelty of the adventure, the emperor's tongue cleaved to his mouth, and ere he could summon resolution, even for a gesture of courtesy, the fair creature had fled within, and the curtain closed the entrance as before.

Wishing to recover his composure, so strangely troubled, and taking it for granted that some other inmate of the house would soon appear, Yuentsoong turned his steps aside to the grove, and with his head bowed, and his spear in the hollow of his arm, tried to recall more vividly the features of the vision he had seen. He had walked but a few paces, when there came toward him from the upper skirt of the grove a man of unusual stature and erectness, with white hair, unbraided on his shoulders, and every sign of age except infirmity of step and mien. The emperor's habitual dignity had now rallied, and on his first salutation, the countenance of the old man softened, and he quickened his pace to meet and give him welcome.

"You are noble?" he said with confident inquiry.

Yuentsoong colored slightly.

"I am," he replied, "Lew-melin, a prince of the empire."

"And by what accident here?"

Yuentsoong explained the clue of the peach-blossoms, and represented himself as exiled for a time to the deserted palace upon the lakes.

"I have a daughter," said the old man, abruptly, "who has never looked on human face save mine."

"Pardon me!" replied his visitor; "I have thoughtlessly intruded on her sight, and a face more heavenly fair—"

The emperor hesitated but the old man smiled encouragingly.

"It is time," he said, "that I should provide a younger defender for my bright Teh-leen, and Heaven has sent you in the season of peach-blossoms, with provident kindness. You have frankly revealed to me your name and rank. Before I offer you the hospitality of my roof I must tell you mine. I am Choo-tseen, the outlaw, once of your own rank and the general of the Celestial army."

The emperor started, remembering that this celebrated rebel was the terror of his father's throne.

"You have heard my history," the old man continued. "I had been, before my rebellion, in charge of the imperial palace on the lake. Anticipating an evil day, I secretly prepared this retreat for my family; and when my soldiers deserted me at the battle of Kechow, and a price was set upon my head, hither I fled with my women and children; and the last alive is my beautiful Teh-leen. With this brief outline of my life, you are at liberty to leave me as you came, or to enter my house, on the condition that you become the protector of my child."

The emperor eagerly turned toward the pavilion, and with a step as light as his own, the erect and stately outlaw hastened to lift the curtain before him. Leaving his guest for a moment in the outer apartment, he entered into an inner chamber in search of his daughter, whom he brought, panting with fear, and blushing with surprise and delight, to her future lover and protector.

Bewildering was Teh-leen. Her mouth's corners were dimpled, yet pensive. With the delicacy of a pale rose, her complexion put to shame the floating light of day. The natural gloss of her hair resembled the uncertain sheen of calm water, yet without the aid of false unguents. The native intelligence of her mind seemed to have gained strength by retirement, and he who beheld her, thought not of her as human. Of rare beauty, of rarer intellect was Teh-leen, and her heart responded to the poet's lute. . . .

Yuentsoong's nature was passionately devoted and confiding; and like two brothers with one favorite sister, lived together Teh-leen, Szema, a Tartar prince, and the emperor. The Tartar prince, if his heart knew a mistress before the arrival of Teh-leen at the palace, owned afterward no other than her; and fearless of check or suspicion from the noble confidence and generous friendship of Yuentsoong, he seemed to live but for her service, and to have neither energies nor ambitions except for the winning of her smiles. Szema was of greater personal beauty, frank when it did not serve him to be wily, bold in his pleasures, and of manners almost femininely soft and voluptuous. He was renowned as a soldier, and for Teh-leen, he became a poet and master of the lute; and like all men

formed for ensnaring the hearts of women, he seemed to forget himself in the absorbing devotion to his idolatry. His friend, the emperor, was of another mould. Yuentsoong's heart had three chambers—love, friendship and glory. Teh-leen was but a third in his existence, yet he loved her—the sequel will show how well! In person he was less beautiful than majestic, of large stature, and with a brow and lip naturally stern and lofty. He seldom smiled, even upon Teh-leen, whom he would watch for hours in pensive and absorbed delight; but his smile, when it did awake, broke over his sad countenance like morning. All men loved and honored Yuentsoong, and all men, except only the emperor, looked on Szema with antipathy. To such natures as the former, women give all honor and approbation; but for such as the latter, they reserve their weakness!

Wrapt up in his friend and mistress, and reserved in his intercourse with his counselors, Yuentsoong knew not that, throughout the imperial city, Szema was called the *kieu,* or robber-bird, and his fair Teh-leen was openly charged with dishonor. Going out alone to hunt as was his custom, and having left his signet with Szema, to pass and repass through the private apartments at his pleasure, his horse fell with him unaccountably in the open field. Somewhat superstitious, and remembering that good spirits sometimes "knit the grass," when other obstacles fail to bar our way to danger, the emperor drew rein and returned to his palace. It was an hour after noon, and having dismissed his attendants at the city gate, he entered by a postern to the imperial garden, and bethought himself of the concealed couch in a cool grotto by a fountain (a favorite retreat, sacred to himself and Teh-leen), where he fancied it would be refreshing to sleep away the sultriness of the remaining hours till evening. Sitting down by the side of the murmuring fount, he bathed his feet, and left his slippers on the lip of the basin so he might be unencumbered in his repose within, and so with unechoing step entered the resounding grotto. Alas! there slumbered the faithless friend with the guilty Teh-leen upon his bosom!

Grief struck through the noble heart of the emperor like a sword in cold blood. With a word he could consign to torture and death the robber of his honor, but there was agony in his bosom deeper than revenge. He turned silently away, recalled his horse and huntsmen, and, outstripping all, plunged on through the forest till night gathered around him.

Yuentsoong had been absent many days from his capitol, and his subjects were murmuring their fears for his safety, when a messenger arrived to the counselors informing them of the appointment to the captive Tartar prince to the government of the province of Szechuen, the second honor of the Celestial empire. A private order accompanied the announcement, commanding the immediate departure of Szema for the scene of his new authority. Inexplicable as was this riddle to the multitude, there were those who read it truly by their knowledge of the magnanimous soul of the emperor; and among these was the crafty object of his generosity. Losing no time, he set forward with great pomp for Szechuen, and in their joy to see him no more

in the palace, the slighted princes of the empire forgave him his unmerited advancement. Yuentsoong returned to his capitol; but to the terror of his counselors and people, his hair was blanched white as the head of an old man! He was pale as well, but he was cheerful beyond his wont, and to Teh-leen untiring in pensive and humble attentions. . . .

Six months from this period the capitol was thrown into a tumult with the intelligence that the province of Szechuen was in rebellion, and Szema at the head of a numerous army on his way to seize the throne of Yuentsoong. This last sting betrayed the serpent even to the forgiving emperor, and tearing the reptile at last from his heart, he entered with the spirit of other times into warlike preparations. The imperial army was in a few days on its march, and at Keo-Yang the opposing forces met and prepared for encounter.

With the dread of the popular feeling toward Teh-leen, Yuentsoong had commanded for her a closed litter, and she was borne after the imperial standard in the center of the army. On the eve before the battle, ere the watch-fires were lit, the emperor came to her tent, set apart from his own, and with the delicate care and gentleness from which he never varied, inquired how her wants were supplied, and bade her, thus early farewell for the night; his custom of passing among his soldiers on the evening previous to an engagement promising to interfere with what was usually his last duty before retiring to his couch.

Teh-leen on this occasion seemed moved by some irrepressible emotion, and, as he rose to depart, she fell forward upon her face and bathed his feet with her tears. Attributing it to one of those excesses of feeling to which all, but especially hearts ill at ease, are liable, the noble monarch gently raised her, and, with repeated efforts of reassurance, committed her to the hands of her women. His own heart beat far from tranquilly, for, in the excess of his pity for her grief, he had unguardedly called her by one of the sweet names of their early days of love—strange word now upon his lips—and it brought back, spite of memory and truth, happiness that would not be forgotten!

It was past midnight, and the moon was riding high in heaven, when the emperor, returning between the lengthening watch-fires sought out the small lamp, which, suspended like a star above his own tent, guided him back from the irregular mazes of the camp. Paled by the intense radiance of the moonlight, the small globe of alabaster at length became apparent to his weary eye, and with one glance at the peaceful beauty of the heavens, he parted the curtained door beneath it, and stood within. The Chinese historian asserts that a bird, from whose wing Teh-leen had once plucked an arrow, restoring it to liberty and life, in grateful attachment to her destiny, had removed the lamp from the imperial tent and suspended it over hers. The emperor stood beside her couch. Startled at his inadvertent error, he turned to retire; but the lifted curtain let in a flood of moonlight upon the sleeping features of Teh-leen, and like dew-drops the undried tears glistened in her silken lashes. A lamp burned faintly in the inner apart-

ment of the tent and her attendants slept soundly. His soft heart gave way. Taking up the lamp, he held it over his beautiful mistress, and once more gazed passionately and unrestrainedly on her unparalleled beauty. The past—the early past—was alone before him. He forgave her—there as she slept, unconscious of the throbbing of his injured, but noble heart, so close beside her—he forgave her in the long silent abysses of his soul! Unwilling to wake her from her tranquil slumber, but promising to himself from that hour such sweets of confiding love as had well-nigh been lost to him forever, he imprinted one kiss upon the parted lips of Teh-leen, and sought his couch for slumber.

Ere daybreak the emperor was aroused by one of his attendants with news too important for delay. Szema, the rebel, had been arrested in the imperial camp, disguised, and on his way back to his own forces, and like wildfire, the information had spread among the soldiery, who, in a state of mutinous excitement, were with difficulty restrained from rushing upon the tent of Teh-leen. At the door of his tent, Yuentsoong found messengers from the alarmed princes and officers of the different commands, imploring immediate aid and the imperial presence to allay the excitement, and while the emperor prepared to mount his horse, the guard arrived with the Tartar prince, ignominiously tied, and bearing marks of rough usage from his indignant captors.

"Loose him!" cried the emperor in a voice of thunder.

The cords were severed, and with a glance whose ferocity expressed no thanks, Szema reared himself up to his fullest height, and looked scornfully around him. Daylight had now broken, and as the group stood upon an eminence in sight of the whole army, shouts began to ascend, and the armed multitude, breaking all restraint, rolled in toward the center. Attracted by the commotion, Yuentsoong turned to give some orders to those near him, when Szema suddenly sprang upon an officer of the guard, wrenched his drawn sword from his grasp, and in an instant was lost to sight in the tent of Teh-leen. A sharp scream, a second of thought, and forth again rushed the desperate murderer, with his sword flinging drops of blood, and ere a foot stirred in the paralyzed group, the avenging scimitar of Yuentsoong had cleft him to the chin.

A hush, as if the whole army were struck dumb by a bolt from heaven, followed this rapid tragedy. Dropping the polluted sword from his hand, the emperor, with uncertain step, and the pallor of death upon his countenance, entered the fatal tent.

He came no more forth that day. The army was marshalled by the princes, and the rebels were routed with great slaughter; but Yuentsoong never more wielded sword. "He pined to death," says the historian, "with the wane of the same moon that shone upon the forgiveness of Teh-leen."

St. John's Eve

THOMA GRIGOROVITCH had one very strange eccentricity: to the day of his death he never liked to tell the same thing twice. There were times when, if you asked him to relate a thing afresh, he would interpolate new matter, or alter it so that it was impossible to recognise it. Once upon a time, one of those gentleman who, like the usurers at our yearly fairs, clutch and beg and steal every sort of frippery, and issue mean little volumes, no thicker than an A B C book, every month, or ever every week, wormed this same story out of Thoma Grigorovitch, and the latter completely forgot about it. But that same young gentleman, in the pea-green caftan, came from Poltava, bringing with him a little book, and, opening it in the middle, showed it to us. Thoma Grigorovitch was on the point of setting his spectacles astride of his nose, but recollected that he had forgotten to wind thread about them and stick them together with wax, so he passed it over to me. As I understand something about reading and writing, and do not wear spectacles, I undertook to read it. I had not turned two leaves when all at once he caught me by the hand and stopped me.

"Stop! tell me first what you are reading."

I confess that I was a trifle stunned by such a question.

"What! what am I reading, Thoma Grigorovitch? Why, your own words."

"Who told you that they were my words?"

"Why, what more would you have? Here it is printed: 'Related by such and such a sacristan.'"

"Spit on the head of the man who printed that! he lies, the dog of a Moscow pedlar! Did I say that? 'Twas just the same as though one hadn't his wits about him!' Listen. I'll tell the tale to you on the spot."

We moved up to the table, and he began.

My grandfather (the kingdom of heaven be his! may he eat only wheaten rolls and poppy-seed cakes with honey in the other world!) could tell a story wonderfully well. When he used to begin a tale you could not stir from the spot all day, but kept on listening. He was not like the story-teller of the present day, when he begins to lie, with a tongue as though he had had nothing to eat for three days, so that you snatch your cap and flee from the house. I remember my old mother was alive then, and in the long winter evenings when the frost was crackling out of doors, and had sealed up hermetically the narrow panes of our cottage, she used to sit at her wheel, drawing out a long thread in her hand, rocking the cradle with her foot, and humming a song, which I seem to hear even now.

The lamp, quivering and flaring up as though in fear of something, lighted up our cottage; the spindle hummed; and all of us children, collected in a cluster, listened to grandfather, who had not crawled off the stove for more than five years, owing to his great age. But the wondrous tales of the incursions of the Zaporozhian Cossacks and

the Poles, the bold deeds of Podkova, of Poltar-Kozhukh, and Sagaidatchnii, did not interest us so much as the stories about some deed of old which always sent a shiver through our frames and made our hair rise upright on our heads. Sometimes such terror took possession of us in consequence of them, that, from that evening forward, Heaven knows how wonderful everything seemed to us. If one chanced to go out of the cottage after nightfall for anything, one fancied that a visitor from the other world had lain down to sleep in one's bed; and I have often taken my own smock, at a distance, as it lay at the head of the bed, for the Evil One rolled up in a ball! But the chief thing about grandfather's stories was, that he had never lied in all his life; and whatever he said was so, was so.

I will now tell you one of his wonderful tales. I know that there are a great many wise people who copy in the courts, and can even read civil documents, but who, if you were to put into their hand a simple prayer-book, could not make out the first letter in it, and would show all their teeth in derision. These people laugh at everything you tell them. Along comes one of them—and doesn't believe in witches! Yes, glory to God that I have lived so long in the world! I have seen heretics to whom it would be easier to lie in confession than it would be to our brothers and equals to take snuff, and these folk would deny the existence of witches! But let them just dream about something, and they won't even tell what it was! There, it is no use talking about them!

No one could have recognised the village of ours a little over a hundred years ago; it was a hamlet, the poorest kind of a hamlet. Half a score of miserable farm-houses, unplastered and badly thatched, were scattered here and there about the fields. There was not a yard or a decent shed to shelter animals or waggons. That was the way the wealthy lived: and if you had looked for our brothers, the poor—why, a hole in ground—that was a cabin for you! Only by the smoke could you tell that a God-created man lived there. You ask why they lived so? It was not entirely through poverty: almost every one led a raiding Cossack life, and gathered not a little plunder in foreign lands; it was rather because it was little use building up a good wooden house. Many folk were engaged in raids all over the country—Crimeans, Poles, Lithuanians! It was quite possible that their own countrymen might make a descent and plunder everything. Anything was possible.

In this hamlet a man, or rather a devil in human form, often made his appearance. Why he came, and whence, no one knew. He prowled about, got drunk, and suddenly disappeared as if into the air, leaving no trace of his existence. Then, behold, he seemed to have dropped from the sky again, and went flying about the street of the village, of which no trace now remains, and which was not more than a hundred paces from Dikanka. He would collect together all the Cossacks he met; then there were songs, laughter, and cash in plenty, and vodka flowed like water. . . . He would address the pretty girls, and give them ribbons, earrings, strings of beads—more than they knew what to do with. It is true

that the pretty girls rather hesitated about accepting his presents: God knows, perhaps, what unclean hands they had passed through. My grandfather's aunt, who kept at that time a tavern, in which Basavriuk (as they called this devil-man) often caroused, said that no consideration on the earth would have induced her to accept a gift from him. But then, again, how avoid accepting? Fear seized on every one when he knit his shaggy brows, and gave a sidelong glance which might send your feet God knows whither: whilst if you did accept, then the next night some fiend from the swamp, with horns on his head, came and began to squeeze your neck, if there was a string of beads upon it; or bite your finger, if there was a ring upon it; or drag you by the hair, if ribbons were braided in it. God have mercy, then, on those who held such gifts! But here was the difficulty: it was impossible to get rid of them; if you threw them into the water, the diabolical ring or necklace would skim along the surface and into your hand.

There was a church in the village—St. Pantelei, if I remember rightly. There lived there a priest, Father Athanasii of blessed memory. Observing that Basavriuk did not come to church, even at Easter, he determined to reprove him and impose penance upon him. Well, he hardly escaped with his life. "Hark ye, sir!" he thundered in reply, "learn to mind your own business instead of meddling in other people's, if you don't want that throat of yours stuck together with boiling kutya." What was to be done with this unrepentant man? Father Athanasii contented himself with announcing that any one who should make the acquaintance of Basavriuk would be counted a Catholic, an enemy of Christ's orthodox church, not a member of the human race.

In this village there was a Cossack named Korzh, who had a labourer whom people called Peter the Orphan—perhaps because no one remembered either his father or mother. The church elder, it is true, said that they had died of the pest in his second year; but my grandfather's aunt would not hear of that, and tried with all her might to furnish him with parents, although poor Peter needed them about as much as we need last year's snow. She said that his father had been in Zaporozhe, and had been taken prisoner by the Turks, amongst whom he underwent God only knows what tortures, until having, by some miracle, disguised himself as a eunuch, he made his escape. Little cared the black-browed youths and maidens about Peter's parents. They merely remarked, that if he only had a new coat, a red sash, a black lambskin cap with a smart blue crown on his head, a Turkish sabre by his side, a whip in one hand and a pipe with handsome mountings in the other, he would surpass all the young men. But the pity was, that the only thing poor Peter had was a grey gaberdine with more holes in it than there are gold pieces in a Jew's pocket. But that was not the worst of it. Korzh had a daughter, such a beauty as I think you can hardly have chanced to see. My grandfather's aunt used to say—and you know that it is easier for a woman to kiss the Evil One than to call any one else a beauty—that this Cossack maid-

en's cheeks were as plump and fresh as the pinkest poppy when, bathed in God's dew, it unfolds its petals, and coquets with the rising sun; that her brows were evenly arched over her bright eyes like black cords, such as our maidens buy nowadays, for their crosses and ducats, off the Moscow pedlars who visit the villages with their baskets; that her little mouth, at sight of which the youths smacked their lips, seemed made to warble the songs of nightingales; that her hair, black as the raven's wing, and soft as young flax, fell in curls over her shoulders, for our maidens did not then plait their hair in pigtails interwoven with pretty, bright-hued ribbons. Eh! may I never intone another alleluia in the choir, if I would not have kissed her, in spite of the grey which is making its way through the old wool which covers my pate, and of the old woman beside me, like a thorn in my side! Well, you know what happens when young men and maidens live side by side. In the twilight the heels of red boots were always visible in the place where Pidórka chatted with her Peter. But Korzh would never have suspected anything out of the way, only one day—it is evident that none but the Evil One could have inspired him—Peter took into his head to kiss the maiden's rosy lips with all his heart, without first looking well about him; and that same Evil One—may the son of a dog dream of the holy cross!—caused the old grey-beard, like a fool, to open the cottage door at that same moment. Korzh was petrified, dropped his jaw, and clutched at the door for support. Those unlucky kisses completely stunned him.

Recovering himself, he took his grandfather's hunting whip from the wall, and was about to belabour Peter's back with it, when Pidórka's little six-year-old brother Ivas rushed up from somewhere or other, and, grasping his father's legs with his little hands, screamed out, "Daddy, daddy! don't beat Peter!" What was to be done? A father's heart is not made of stone. Hanging the whip again upon the wall, he led Peter quietly from the house. "If you ever show yourself in my cottage again, or even under the windows, look out, Peter, for, by heaven, your black mustache will disappear; and your black locks, though wound twice about your ears, will take leave of your pate, or my name is not Terentiy Korzh." So saying, he gave him such a taste of his fist in the nape of his neck, that all grew dark before Peter, and he flew headlong out of the place.

So there was an end of their kissing. Sorrow fell upon our turtle doves; and a rumour grew rife in the village that a certain Pole, all embroidered with gold, with mustaches, sabre, spurs, and pockets jingling like the bells of the bag with which our sacristan Taras goes through the church every day, had begun to frequent Korzh's house. Now, it is well known why a father has visitors when there is a black-browed daughter about. So, one day, Pidórka burst into tears, and caught the hand of her brother Ivas. "Ivas, my dear! Ivas, my love! fly to Peter, my child of gold, like an arrow from a bow. Tell him all: I would have loved his brown eyes, I would have kissed his fair face, but my fate decrees otherwise. More than one handkerchief have I wet with burning tears. I am sad and heavy at

heart. And my own father is my enemy. I will not marry the Pole, whom I do not love. Tell him they are making ready for a wedding, but there will be no music at our wedding: priests will sing instead of pipes and viols. I shall not dance with my bridegroom: they will carry me out. Dark, dark will be my dwelling of maple wood; and, instead of chimneys, a cross will stand upon the roof."

Peter stood petrified, without moving from the spot, when the innocent child lisped out Pidórka's words to him. "And I, wretched man, had thought to go to the Crimea and Turkey, to win gold and return to thee, my beauty! But it may not be. We have been overlooked by the evil eye. I too shall have a wedding, dear one; but no ecclesiastics will be present at that wedding. The black crow instead of the pope will caw over me; the bare plain will be my dwelling; the dark blue cloud my roof-tree. The eagle will claw out my brown eyes: the rain will wash my Cossack bones, and the whirlwinds will dry them. But what am I? Of what should I complain? 'Tis clear God willed it so. If I am to be lost, then so be it!" and he went straight to the tavern.

My late grandfather's aunt was somewhat surprised at seeing Peter at the tavern, at an hour when good men go to morning mass; and stared at him as though in a dream when he called for a jug of brandy, about half a pailful. But the poor fellow tried in vain to drown his woe. The vodka stung his tongue like nettles, and tasted more bitter than wormwood. He flung the jug from him upon the ground.

"You have sorrowed enough, Cossack," growled a bass voice behind him. He looked round—it was Basavriuk! Ugh, what a face! His hair was like a brush, his eyes like those of a bull. "I know what you lack: here it is." As he spoke he jingled a leather purse which hung from his girdle and smiled diabolically. Peter shuddered. "Ha, ha, ha! how it shines!" he roared, shaking out ducats into his hands: "ha, ha, ha! how it jingles! And I only ask one thing for a whole pile of such shiners."

"It is the Evil One!" exclaimed Peter. "Give me them! I'm ready for anything!"

They struck hands upon it, and Basavriuk said, "You are just in time, Peter: to-morrow is St. John the Baptist's day. Only on this one night in the year does the fern blossom. I will await you at midnight in the Bear's ravine."

I do not believe that chickens await the hour when the housewife brings their corn with as much anxiety as Peter awaited the evening. He kept looking to see whether the shadows of the trees were not lengthening, whether the sun was not turning red towards setting; and, the longer he watched, the more impatient he grew. How long it was! Evidently, God's day had lost its end somewhere. But now the sun has set. The sky is red only on one side, and it is already growing dark. It grows colder in the fields. It gets gloomier and gloomier, and at last quite dark. At last! With heart almost bursting from his bosom, he set out and cautiously made his way down through the thick woods into the deep hollow called the Bear's ravine. Basavriuk was already waiting there. It was so dark that you could not see a

yard before you. Hand in hand they entered the ravine, pushing through the luxuriant thorn-bushes and stumbling at almost every step. At last they reached an open spot. Peter looked about him: he had never chanced to come there before. Here Basavriuk halted.

"Do you see before you three hillocks? There are a great many kinds of flowers upon them. May some power keep you from plucking even one of them. But as soon as the fern blossoms, seize it, and look not round, no matter what may seem to be going on behind thee."

Peter wanted to ask some questions, but behold Basavriuk was no longer there. He approached the three hillocks—where were the flowers? He saw none. The wild steppe-grass grew all around, and hid everything in its luxuriance. But the lightning flashed; and before him was a whole bed of flowers, all wonderful, all strange: whilst amongst them there were also the simple fronds of fern. Peter doubted his senses, and stood thoughtfully before them, arms akimbo.

"What manner of prodigy is this? why, one can see these weeds ten times a day. What is there marvellous about them? Devil's-face must be mocking me!"

But behold! the tiny flower-bud of the fern reddened and moved as though alive. It was a marvel in truth. It grew larger and larger, and glowed like a burning coal. The tiny stars of light flashed up, something burst softly, and the flower opened before his eyes like a flame, lighting the others about it.

"Now is the time," thought Peter, and extended his hand. He saw hundreds of hairy hands reach also for the flower from behind him, and there was a sound of scampering in his rear. He half closed his eyes, and plucked sharply at the stalk, and the flower remained in his hand.

All became still.

Upon a stump sat Basavriuk, quite blue like a corpse. He did not move so much as a finger. His eyes were immovably fixed on something visible to him alone: his mouth was half open and speechless. Nothing stirred around. Ugh! it was horrible!—But then a whistle was heard, which made Peter's heart grow cold within him; and it seemed to him that the grass whispered, and the flowers began to talk among themselves in delicate voices, like little silver bells, whilst the trees rustled in murmuring contention; — Basavriuk's face suddenly became full of life, and his eyes sparkled. "The witch has just returned," he muttered between his teeth. "Hearken, Peter: a charmer will stand before you in a moment; do whatever she commands; if not—you are lost forever."

Then he parted the thorn-bushes with a knotty stick, and before him stood a tiny farmhouse. Basavriuk smote it with his fist, and the wall trembled. A large black dog ran out to meet them, and with a whine transformed itself into a cat and flew straight at his eyes.

"Don't be angry, don't be angry, you old Satan!" said Basavriuk, employing such words as would have made a good man stop his ears. Behold, instead of a cat, an old woman all bent into a bow, with a face wrinkled like a baked apple, and a nose and chin like a pair of nutcrackers.

"A fine charmer!" thought Peter; and cold chills ran down his back. The

witch tore the flower from his hand, stooped and muttered over it for a long time, sprinkling it with some kind of water. Sparks flew from her mouth, and foam appeared on her lips.

"Throw it away," she said, giving it back to Peter.

Peter threw it, but what wonder was this? The flower did not fall straight to the earth, but for a long while twinkled like a fiery ball through the darkness, and swam through the air like a boat. At last it began to sink lower and lower, and fell so far away that the little star, hardly larger than a poppy-seed, was barely visible. "There!" croaked the old woman, in a dull voice: and Basavriuk, giving him a spade, said, "Dig here, Peter: you will find more gold than you or Korzh ever dreamed of."

Peter spat on his hands, seized the spade, pressed his foot on it, and turned up the earth, a second, a third, a fourth time. The spade clinked against something hard, and would go no farther. Then his eyes began to distinguish a small, iron-bound coffer. He tried to seize it; but the chest began to sink into the earth, deeper, farther, and deeper still: whilst behind him he heard a laugh like a serpent's hiss

"No, you shall not have the gold until you shed human blood," said the witch, and she led up to him a child of six, covered with a white sheet, and indicated by a sign that he was to cut off his head.

Peter was stunned. A trifle, indeed, to cut off a man's or even an innocent child's, head for no reason whatever! In wrath he tore off the sheet enveloping the victim's head, and behold! before him stood Ivas. The poor child crossed his little hands, and hung his head. Peter flew at the witch with the knife like a madman, and was on the point of laying hands on her.

"What did you promise for the girl?" thundered Basavriuk; and like a shot he was on his back. The witch stamped her foot: a blue flame flashed from the earth and illumined all within it. The earth became transparent as if moulded of crystal; and all that was within it became visible, as if in the palm of the hand. Ducats, precious stones in chests and pots, were piled in heaps beneath the very spot they stood on. Peter's eyes flashed, his mind grew troubled. . . . He grasped the knife like a madman, and the innocent blood spurted into his eyes. Diabolical laughter resounded on all sides. Misshapen monsters flew past him in flocks. The witch, fastening her hands in the headless trunk, like a wolf, drank its blood. His head whirled. Collecting all his strength, he set out to run. Everything grew red before him. The trees seemed steeped in blood, and burned and groaned. The sky glowed and threatened. Burning points, like lightning, flickered before his eyes. Utterly exhausted, he rushed into his miserable hovel and fell to the ground like a log. A death-like sleep overpowered him.

Two days and two nights did Peter sleep, without once awakening. When he came to himself, on the third day, he looked long at all the corners of his hut; but in vain did he endeavour to recollect what had taken place; his memory was like a miser's pocket, from which you cannot entice a quarter of a kopek. Stretching himself, he heard something clash at his feet. He looked, there were two bags of gold. Then

only, as if in a dream, he recollected that he had been seeking for treasure, and that something had frightened him in the woods. But at what price he had obtained it, and how, he could by no means tell.

Korzh saw the sacks—and was mollified. "A fine fellow, Peter, quite unequalled! yes, and did I not love him? Was he not to me as my own son?" And the old fellow repeated this fiction until he wept over it himself. Pidórka began to tell Peter how some passing gypsies had stolen Ivas; but he could not even recall him—to such a degree had the Devil's influence darkened his mind! There was no reason for delay. The Pole was dismissed, and the wedding-feast prepared; rolls were baked, towels and handkerchiefs embroidered; the young people were seated at table; the wedding-loaf was cut; guitars, cymbals, pipes, viols sounded, and pleasure was rife.

A wedding in the olden times was not like one of the present day. My grandfather's aunt used to tell how the maidens—in festive head-dresses of yellow, blue, and pink ribbons, above which they bound gold braid; in thin chemisettes embroidered on all the seams with red silk, and strewn with tiny silver flowers; in morocco shoes, with high iron heels—danced the gorlitza as swimmingly as peacocks, and as wildly as the whirlwind; how the youths—with their ship-shaped caps upon their heads, the crowns of gold brocade, and two horns projecting, one in front and another behind, of the very finest black lambskin; in tunics of the finest blue silk with red borders—stepped forward one by one, their arms akimbo in stately form, and executed the gopak; how the lads—in tall Cossack caps, and light cloth gaberdines, girt with silver embroidered belts, their short pipes in their teeth—skipped before them and talked nonsense. Even Korzh as he gazed at the young people could not help getting gay in his old age. Guitar in hand, alternately puffing at his pipe and singing, a brandy-glass upon his head, the greybeard began the national dance amid loud shouts from the merry-makers.

What will not people devise in merry mood? They even began to disguise their faces till they did not look like human beings. On such occasions one would dress himself as a Jew, another as the Devil: they would begin by kissing each other, and end by seizing each other by the hair. God be with them! you laughed till you held your sides. They dressed themselves in Turkish and Tartar garments. All upon them glowed like a conflagration, and then they began to joke and play pranks. . . .

An amusing thing happened to my grandfather's aunt, who was at this wedding. She was wearing an ample Tartar robe, and, wine-glass in hand, was entertaining the company. The Evil One instigated one man to pour vodka over her from behind. Another, at the same moment, evidently not by accident, struck a light, and held it to her. The flames flashed up, and poor aunt, in terror, flung her dress off, before them all. Screams, laughter, jests, arose as if at a fair. In a word, the old folks could not recall so merry a wedding.

Pidórka and Peter began to live like a gentleman and lady. There was plenty of everything and everything was

fine. . . . But honest folk shook their heads when they marked their way of living. "From the Devil no good can come," they unanimously agreed. "Whence, except from the tempter of orthodox people, came this wealth? Where else could he have got such a lot of gold from? Why, on the very day that he got rich, did Basavriuk vanish as if into thin air?"

Say, if you can, that people only imagine things! A month had not passed, and no one would have recognized Peter. He sat in one spot, saying no word to any one; but continually thinking and seemingly trying to recall something. When Pidórka succeeded in getting him to speak, he appeared to forget himself, and would carry on a conversation, and even grow cheerful; but if he inadvertently glanced at the sacks, "Stop, stop! I have forgotten," he would cry, and again plunge into reverie and strive to recall something. Sometimes when he sat still a long time in one place, it seemed to him as though it were coming, just coming back to mind, but again all would fade away. It seemed as if he was sitting in the tavern: they brought him vodka; vodka stung him; vodka was repulsive to him. Some one came along and struck him on the shoulder; but beyond that everything was veiled in darkness before him. The perspiration would stream down his face, and he would sit exhausted in the same place.

What did not Pidórka do? She consulted the sorceresses; and they poured out fear, and brewed stomach ache—but all to no avail. And so the summer passed. Many a Cossack had mowed and reaped: many a Cossack, more enterprising than the rest, had set off upon an expedition. Flocks of ducks were already crowding the marshes, but there was not even a hint of improvement.

It was red upon the steppes. Ricks of grain, like Cossacks' caps, dotted the fields here and there. On the highway were to be encountered waggons loaded with brushwood and logs. The ground had become more solid, and in places was touched with frost. Already had the snow begun to fall and the branches of the trees were covered with rime like rabbit-skin. Already on frosty days the robin redbreast hopped about on the snow-heaps like a foppish Polish nobleman, and picked out grains of corn; and children, with huge sticks, played hockey upon the ice; while their fathers lay quietly on the stove, issuing forth at intervals with lighted pipes in their lips, to growl, in regular fashion, at the orthodox frost, or to take the air, and thresh the grain spread out in the barn. At last the snow began to melt, and the ice slipped away: but Peter remained the same; and, the more time went on, the more morose he grew. He sat in the cottage as though nailed to the spot, with the sacks of gold at his feet. He grew averse to companionship, his hair grew long, he became terrible to look at; and still he thought of but one thing, still he tried to recall something, and got angry and ill-tempered because he could not. Often, rising wildly from his seat, he gesticulated violently and fixed his eyes on something as though desirous of catching it: his lips moving as though desirous of uttering some long-forgotten word, but remaining speechless. Fury would take possession of

him: he would gnaw and bite his hands like a man half crazy, and in his vexation would tear out his hair by the handful, until, calming down, he would relapse into forgetfulness, as it were, and then would again strive to recall the past and be again seized with fury and fresh tortures. What visitation of God was this?

Pidórka was neither dead nor alive. At first it was horrible to her to remain alone with him in the cottage; but, in course of time, the poor woman grew accustomed to her sorrow. But it was impossible to recognize the Pidórka of former days. No blushes, no smiles: she was thin and worn with grief, and had wept her bright eyes away. Once some one who took pity on her advised her to go to the witch who dwelt in the Bear's ravine, and enjoyed the reputation of being able to cure every disease in the world. She determined to try this last remedy: and finally persuaded the old woman to come to her. This was on St. John's Eve, as it chanced. Peter lay insensible on the bench, and did not observe the newcomer. Slowly he rose, and looked about him. Suddenly he trembled in every limb, as though he were on the scaffold: his hair rose upon his head, and he laughed a laugh that thrilled Pidórka's heart with fear.

"I have remembered, remembered!" he cried, in terrible joy; and, swinging a hatchet round his head, he struck at the old woman with all his might. The hatchet penetrated the oaken door nearly four inches. The old woman disappeared; and a child of seven, covered in a white sheet, stood in the middle of the cottage. . . . The sheet flew off. "Ivas!" cried Pidórka, and ran to him; but the apparition became covered from head to foot with blood, and illumined the whole room with red light. . . .

She ran into the passage in her terror, but, on recovering herself a little, wished to help Peter. In vain! the door had slammed to behind her, so that she could not open it. People ran up, and began to knock: they broke in the door, as though there were but one mind among them. The whole cottage was full of smoke; and just in the middle, where Peter had stood, was a heap of ashes from whence smoke was still rising. They flung themselves upon the sacks: only broken potsherds lay there instead of ducats. The Cossacks stood with staring eyes and open mouths, as if rooted to the earth, not daring to move a hair, such terror did this wonder inspire in them.

I do not remember what happened next. Pidórka made a vow to go upon a pilgrimage, collected the property left her by her father, and in a few days it was as if she had never been in the village. Whither she had gone, no one could tell. Officious old women would have despatched her to the same place whither Peter had gone; but a Cossack from Kief reported that he had seen, in a cloister, a nun, withered to a mere skeleton who prayed unceasingly. Her fellow-villagers recognised her as Pidórka by the tokens—that no one heard her utter a word; and that she had come on foot, and had brought a frame for the picture of God's mother, set with such brilliant stones that all were dazzled at the sight.

But this was not the end, if you please. On the same day that the Evil One made away with Peter. Basavriuk

appeared again; but all fled from him. They knew what sort of a being he was—none else than Satan, who had assumed human form in order to unearth treasures; and, since treasures do not yield to unclean hands, he seduced the young. That same year, all deserted their earthen huts and collected in a village; but even there there was no peace on account of that accursed Basavriuk.

My late grandfather's aunt said that he was particularly angry with her because she had abandoned her former tavern, and tried with all his might to revenge himself upon her. Once the village elders were assembled in the tavern, and, as the saying goes, were arranging the precedence at the table, in the middle of which was placed a small roasted lamb, shame to say. They chattered about this, that, and the other—among the rest about various marvels and strange things. Well, they saw something; it would have been nothing if only one had seen it, but all saw it. and it was this: the sheep raised his head; his goggling eyes became alive and sparkled; and the black, bristling moustache, which appeared for one instant, make a significant gesture at those present. All at once recognised Basavriuk's countenance in the sheep's head; my grandfather's aunt thought it was on the point of asking for vodka. The worthy elders seized their hats and hastened home.

Another time, the church elder himself, who was fond of an occasional private interview with my grandfather's brandy-glass, had not succeeded in getting to the bottom twice, when he beheld the glass bowing very low to him. "Satan take you, let us make the sign of the cross over you!"—And the same marvel happened to his better half. She had just begun to mix the dough in a huge kneading-trough when suddenly the trough sprang up. "Stop, stop! where are you going?" Putting its arms akimbo, with dignity, it went skipping all about the cottage—You may laugh, but it was no laughing matter to our grandfathers. And in vain did Father Athanasii go through all the village with holy water, and chase the Devil through all the streets with his brush. My late grandfather's aunt long complained that, as soon as it was dark, some one came knocking at her door and scratching at the wall.

Well! All appears to be quiet now in the place where our village stands; but it was not so very long ago—my father was still alive—that I remember how a good man could not pass the ruined tavern which a dishonest race had long managed for their own interest. From the smoke-blackened chimneys smoke poured out in a pillar, and rising high in the air, rolled off like a cap, scattering burning coals over the steppe; and Satan (the son of a dog should not be mentioned) sobbed so pitifully in his lair that the startled ravens rose in flocks from the neighbouring oak-wood and flew through the air with wild cries.